DH on Saturday

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The Power of Good

Enough is enough, says HM on leadership debates

P4

BNP returns to power in Bangladesh with sweeping win

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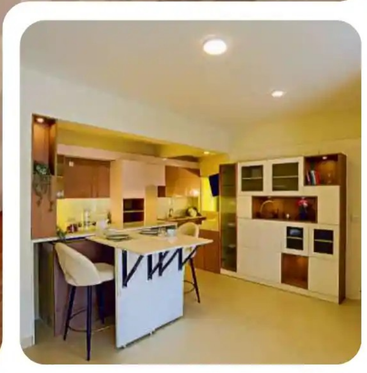

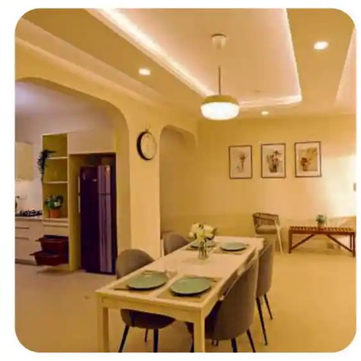

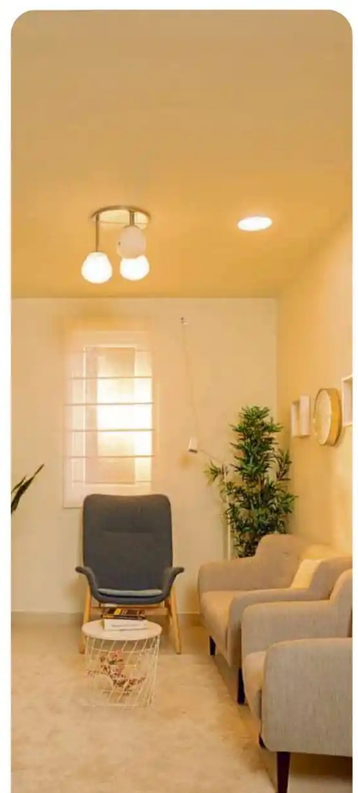

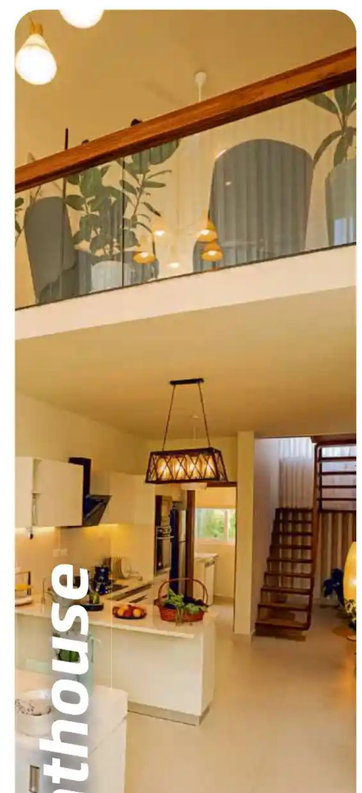

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Air India fined Rs 1 cr for operating plane without certification

P9

DH on Saturday

DECCAN HERALD

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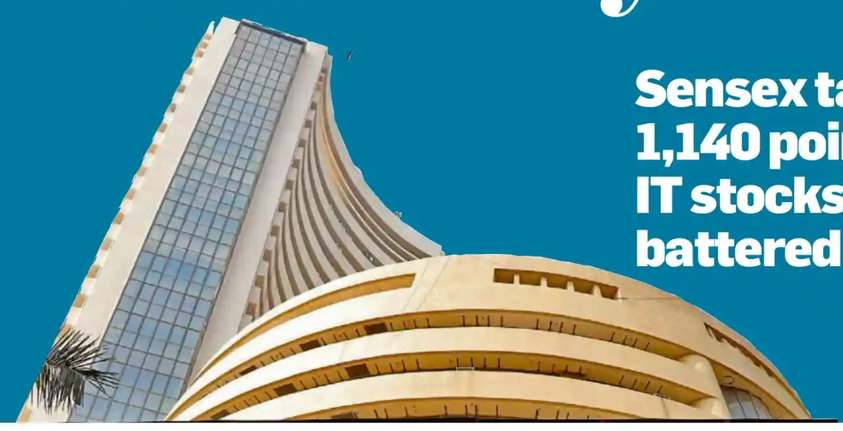

Sensex tanks 1,140 points, IT stocks battered

P10

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Congress dominates T'gana local body polls

BJP finds solace in Karimnagar, Nizamabad

SNV SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

Building on its rural local body triumphs, the ruling Congress in Telangana dominated the municipal elections, leading or winning in about 67 of 116 municipalities and five of seven municipal corporations that went to polls on February 11.

The main opposition BRS managed only 14 municipalities, while the BJP drew a blank there but is set to capture the two largest corporations in north Telangana — Karimnagar and Nizamabad.

Over 30 municipalities remained undecided, with independents playing a critical role amid alliance talks. Counting began at 8 am on Friday across 116 municipalities and seven corporations, covering 414 wards in Kothagudem, Karimnagar, Mahabubnagar, Mancherial, Nizamabad, Nalgonda, and Ramagundam, along with 2,582 municipal wards. Voter turnout stood at 70%, according to state election officials.

In a milestone, Nagilla Sudhakar became Chityala municipality's first transgender ward member, winning Ward 1 as an Independent by over 100 votes against major party rivals.

Observers view the results as an endorsement of Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's governance, particularly in urban areas. Municipal polls are often seen as a gauge of state sentiment. The Congress credited its "visible governance" and Revanth Reddy's outreach on accountability and urban support for its strong showing in urban local bodies, bolstering his leadership image.

Despite the Congress' statewide edge, the BJP shone in Karimnagar, considered north Telangana's political hub, winning 30 seats across 66 divisions — ahead of the Congress (12), BRS (9), AIMIM (3) and others. The BRS slipped to third place from its earlier dominance, while Congress made modest gains but could not halt the BJP's rise.

Needing 34 seats for the mayor's post, the BJP fell four short. However, Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar noted that three independents who were denied BJP tickets had won and would extend support, along with others. Even some rival-ticket winners are reportedly eyeing a switch to the BJP, reaching out to former mayor Sunil Rao.

Rahul, farmer leaders talk movement against US trade deal

Concern for corn, soybean, cotton, fruit & nut farmers

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Friday met with leaders of farmer organisations from across the country and discussed the need for a large-scale national movement to oppose the India-US deal and safeguard the livelihoods of farmers and farm labourers.

Leaders of 17 farmers organisations, including All India Kisan Congress chief Sukhpal S Khaira, held discussions with Rahul at his office in Parliament House, during which concerns about the recently announced trade deal with the US were discussed.

Sources said the farmer leaders expressed their opposition to the US-India trade deal and conveyed their deep concern for the livelihoods of farmers of corn, soyabean, cotton, fruits and nuts. Rahul told them that the trade deal has opened the door for agricultural imports and that many other crops would soon follow.

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi with farmers' leaders. PTI

They also discussed the need for a large-scale national movement to oppose the deal and safeguard the livelihoods of farmers and farm labourers.

After the meeting, Rahul posted on 'X', "Narendra 'Surrender' Modi has betrayed India's farmers and the farmers have realized this. This isn't just a trade deal, it is a direct assault on the livelihoods of our food providers. In today's meeting in Parliament with the delegation from farmers' unions, their concerns were clearly evident."

"Farmers struggling with inflation, rising costs, and uncertainty over MSP are now being left unprepared to face foreign crops backed by massive subsidies and mechanical might. This isn't a fair fight, it is one-sided pressure. The government's hollow assurances won't work anymore. The future of farmers cannot be bartered away without their consent. Come what may, I and the Congress stand with India's food providers for their rights, security, and dignity," he said.

Besides Khaira, the farm leaders who were in the meeting were Ashok Balhara of Bharatiye Kisan Mazdor Union in Haryana, Baldev S Zira of the BKU Krantikari, R Nandkumar of the Progressive Farmers Front, Amarjit S Mohri of the BKU Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Guramneet S Mangat of the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha-India, and Hameed Malik of the J-K Zamidara Forum among others.

Khaira told reporters that a delegation met Rahul to discuss the "anti-farmer" deal, which is "nothing but a complete surrender" to the Americans.

Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Priyanka Chaturvedi interacts with Opposition MPs staging a protest during the Budget session of Parliament in New Delhi on Friday. PTI

3.03 cr IDs axed in 2025 to curb ticketing fraud

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Friday informed the Rajya Sabha that around 3.03 crore suspicious user IDs were deactivated in 2025 to curb online Tatkal ticketing fraud.

"Rigorous revalidation and verification of user accounts have been done. About 3.03 crore suspicious user IDs have been deactivated in 2025," he said in his written reply.

Regular security audits of the reservation system were carried out by empanelled information security audit agencies of CERT-In, he noted.

"Moreover, internet traffic related to the ticketing system is continuously monitored by CERT-In and the National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC) to detect and prevent cyberattacks," he added.

In all, 376 complaints have been lodged on the National Cyber Crime Portal pertaining to 3.99 lakh suspicious bookings, and 12,819 suspicious email domains have been blocked in 2025.

Vaishnaw said Aadhaar-based one-time password (OTP) verification has contributed to improved ticket availability for genuine passengers and enhanced transparency.

Budget Session Phase I ends; Rahul vs BJP takes centre stage

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The first phase of the Budget Session ended on Friday, with the BJP stating it will pursue action against Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi. The session was marked by sharp clashes between Rahul, the Congress, and the government over several issues, including the memoirs of Indian Army Chief MN Naravane, India-US deals and the Epstein Files.

Rahul was not allowed to speak during his reply to the Motion of Thanks debate following the President's address. Breaking with tradition, the prime minister did not speak during the Motion of Thanks debate. Speaker Om Birla later said this was on his advice, as he feared that some Congress women MPs, who had approached the PM's seat to protest, might harm him.

In response, the Congress filed a no-confidence motion against Speaker Birla, who has since decided to step aside from his duties during this period.

The session also saw the suspension of eight MPs for jumping up the chair of the Secretary General and throwing bits of paper.

Privilege motion

On Friday, Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs of India Kiran Rijiju said that the BJP will pursue action against Rahul through MP Nishikant Dubey's substantive motion. Rijiju said that Rahul has said several objectionable things against the government.

"We had decided to file a privilege motion against Rahul for 'illegally' quoting from an unpublished book, as well as many things he spoke about in his Budget speech. He said 'desh bech diya' (sold the country) and said things about the prime minister. But our member Nishikant Dubey has filed a substantive motion, so I said that we will drop the privilege motion. We will speak to the Speaker to see if we can send it to the ethics committee, privilege committee or discuss it in the House; it is undecided," Rijiju said.

Agri-infra helped reduce crop damage: Chouhan

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Agriculture minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan informed the Rajya Sabha on Friday that the Centre has created infrastructure worth Rs 1 lakh crore to preserve fruits, vegetables, and other farm produce, which has helped reduce crop damage by up to 15%.

"I have pride in telling this House that 44,243 customs hiring centres, 25,854 primary processing centres, 25,565 farm harvest automation, 17,779 warehouses, 4,200 grading units, and 3,549 infrastructure for smart agriculture and 2827 cold storage," the minister said.

"Due to this infrastructure creation, the loss of produce of fruits and vegetables has seen a reduction of 5 to 15%," he said.

Attacking the Congress, the minister said the Congress never created any infrastructure to preserve farm produce.

'TVK political bomb is making ripples'

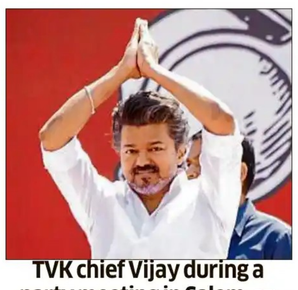
E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) president actor Vijay on Friday told the Congress, without naming, to understand that the DMK was using it only to "win elections", amid a visible strain in the ties between the two parties over sharing power.

Addressing a meeting of his party functionaries in Salem, Vijay also announced that his party would contest the 2026 Assembly elections independently, as the people were with them.

The actor-politician's comments come two days after Chief Minister and DMK chief M K Stalin ruled out a coalition government in Tamil Nadu, saying people would not accept such an arrangement.

"In my address at the Vikravandi conference, I dropped a political bomb that we will offer a share in power to our allies.



TVK chief Vijay during a party meeting in Salem. PTI

That bomb is now creating ripples across alliances in the state. Chief Minister Stalin is jittery about the demand for a share in power," Vijay said.

"He (Stalin) says it (coalition government) won't work in Tamil Nadu. It won't work for them (the DMK). For them, an alliance is only to win elections. He says Velvom Ondraaga (We will win together), but only the DMK will enjoy the wealth," he added.

Vijay's TVK has been sending feelers to the Congress to jump ship for the 2026 Assembly elections by flaunting its "share in power" stand, but the national party, despite a strain in its ties with the DMK, is waiting to launch seat-sharing talks with the Dravidian outfit.

The DMK, which wants to form a single-party government, perceived the Congress' demand for a coalition government as a "pressure tactic".

Meanwhile, the national party appeared to be using the TVK as a bargaining chip to increase its number of seats in the alliance.

In his speech, Vijay once again responded to criticism that he doesn't come out of his home, saying that the entire Tamil Nadu was his home.

He accused the DMK government of not granting permission for his rallies."

Vijay also slammed Stalin for advancing the disbursal of assistance under the Kalaignar Women's Rights Scheme and announcing a new Rs 2,000 "summer special package".

Man faints, dies at Vijay's rally

SALEM (TAMIL NADU), PTI: A 37-year-old man fainted at a TVK rally here on Friday, addressed by party chief Vijay, and died on the way to the hospital, police said.

The man, identified as Suraj, a native of Maharashtra and residing here, collapsed after complaining of chest pain and was immediately rushed to a local hospital.

"He was declared brought dead at the medical facility," a police official said. He also claimed that Suraj had undergone angioplasty sometime ago.

The police have registered a case. Police claimed that the incident happened even before Vijay arrived for the district functionaries' meeting.

This is the first casualty at the TVK rally since the tragic September 27, 2025, stampede in Karur that claimed 41 lives.

DMK credits Rs 5k to 1.31 cr women ahead of Tamil Nadu elections

CHENNAI, DHNS

Placing women at the centre of the high-stakes 2026 Assembly election battle, the DMK government in Tamil Nadu on Friday credited Rs 5,000 into the bank accounts of 1.31 crore beneficiaries of the Rs 1,000 monthly assistance scheme for women. Of this, Rs 3,000 covers advance payments for February, March and April, while the remaining Rs 2,000 is a "special summer assistance".

Chief Minister MK Stalin also announced that the monthly assistance would be increased to Rs 2,000 if the DMK is voted back to power in the April-May elections.

The monthly assistance scheme is one of the flagship programmes of the Stalin government, as the DMK makes a concerted effort to tap into the women's vote bank, long held by its principal rival, the AIADMK. With newcomer Vijay also enjoying appeal among women across sections, the DMK believes the "surprise bonanza" and the enhancement in monthly assistance will ensure women remain with the ruling party.

SUMMER BONUS

- Rs 3,000 as advance for Feb-Apr, plus Rs 2,000 'summer assistance'
- Women's vote bank central to DMK's strategy
- Stalin accuses BJP, AIADMK of conspiring to stall scheme citing model code
- Move mirrors Bihar's cash transfer to women ahead of 2025 polls

Stalin's video message appeared carefully drafted to convey that the DMK is committed not only to continuing the scheme during the election season but also to enhancing the amount. The reason he cited for the advance disbursal was political — accusing the BJP and AIADMK of "conspiring" to stop the scheme for the next few months by citing the Assembly election and the ensuing Model Code of Conduct.

"I can imagine the problems you will face if the monthly assistance is not credited for three months... They (BJP) were trying to stop the scheme for three months by hiding behind elections. Our Dravidian Model government thwarted their designs," he said.

The new announcement will cost the already debt-ridden exchequer Rs 6,500 crore.

Centre clears export of 25L tonnes of wheat

NEW DELHI, DHNS: In a move designed to support farmers and keep domestic markets steady, the Centre on Friday permitted the export of 25 lakh metric tonnes of wheat.

The decision also opens the door for an extra 5 lakh tonnes each of wheat products and sugar exports.

According to the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, this step follows a thorough review of stock levels and market conditions. The goal is to deliver better prices to farmers.

Private wheat stocks for 2025-26 are around 75 lakh tonnes — that's 32 lakh tonnes more than the same time last year, pointing to a solid supply buffer. By April 1, 2026, the Food Corporation of India central pool is expected to hold about 182 lakh tonnes of wheat, leaving plenty for domestic needs even after these exports.

Sexual assault petitioner slams delay in FIR against ex-MLA

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS: A woman filmmaker, who had filed a sexual assault complaint against a former Left Front MLA and filmmaker, has alleged that a case was registered against the accused only around two weeks after she gave a petition to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

Filmmaker Asha Achy Joseph, who gave the petition against ex-MLA P T Kunju Muhammed, has now come out in the open about it.

She said she sent a confidential letter to the CM about the incident on November 24 last year. Within four days, two women police personnel took her statement and said that an FIR would be registered soon.

However, the FIR was registered only after the media reported about the incident on December 8, she said.

Muhammed the was chairman of the selection committee of the International Film Festival of Kerala-2025.

Cong bid to placate Tharoor with Kerala poll role

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

Shashi Tharoor

With the All India Congress Committee (AICC) appointing MP Shashi Tharoor as co-chairman of the campaign committee for the upcoming Assembly elections in Kerala, the party seems to be addressing his concerns about being sidelined.

The AICC has ensured a mix of senior leaders, youth and women in the campaign committee, chaired by senior leader Ramesh Chennithala, and in the manifesto committee, chaired by MP Benny Behanan.

Tharoor's key grievance had been that he was not being given due consideration within the party. The four-time MP from Thiruvananthapuram recently held talks with AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi.

Even as speculation swirled that Tharoor might be made chairman of either the campaign or manifesto committee, Congress leaders said that his elite profile often left him with multiple commitments. Hence, he would not be dissatisfied with being appointed co-chairman.

Moreover, as one of the seniormost Congress leaders in Kerala and a seasoned politician with strong personal rapport, Chennithala is expected to coordinate campaign activities effectively. A key responsibility of the campaign committee chairman is to mobilise funds and resources for the party, something Chennithala is well placed to do.

Meanwhile, with Benny Behanan now appointed chairman of the manifesto committee, there is speculation that he could also be given charge of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee, as incumbent president Sunny Joseph is likely to contest again from Peravoor in Kannur.

BJP got 82% of Rs 3,826 cr via electoral trusts in 2024-25: ADR report

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Manufacturing sector companies donated Rs 1,063.128 crore or 27.78% of Rs 3,826.35 crore, given to electoral trusts to be shared with political parties in 2024-25, a study by the Association for Democratic Reforms said on Friday.

Ten electoral trusts, which declared receiving contributions during 2024-25, got Rs 3,826.34 crore from corporates and individuals and have distributed Rs 3,826.35 crore to various parties. Of this, the BJP received Rs 3,157.65 crore or 82.52% of the total donations received by all parties from electoral trusts, while the Congress received Rs 298.77 crore, or 7.81%.

So far, only 15 of 20 electoral trusts have submitted their report with the Election Commission. Only 10 of them reported receiving any donations from corporates or individuals.

According to the ADR, 228 corporate or business houses have contributed Rs 3,636.81 crore to electoral trusts in 2024-25, while 99 individuals contributed Rs 187.62 crore.

Among the corporate houses, 184 corporates contributed Rs 2,479.04 crore to Prudent Electoral Trust, and 15 companies contributed Rs 915 crore to Progressive Electoral Trust. The report said 96 individuals contributed Rs 187.54 crore to Prudent Electoral Trust, while three individuals contributed Rs 8 lakh to Einzigartig Electoral Trust.

Among the corporates, Elevated Avenue Realty LLP contributed the highest amount of Rs 500 crore, followed by Tata Sons Private Limited with Rs 308.13 crore, Tata Consultancy Services Limited with Rs 217.62 crore, and Megha Engineering & Infrastructure Limited, which contributed Rs 175 crore to various trusts.

Modi inaugurates 'Seva Teerth', new PMO address

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Calling the North and South Block edicts relics of the Colonial era, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said during the inauguration of Seva Teerth, the new address of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), that "a new history is in the making".

"After independence, buildings like South Block and North Block were the catalysts for many important decisions and policies for the country. But it's also true that these buildings were built as symbols of the British Empire. Their purpose was to keep India bound in the shackles of slavery for centuries," Modi said.

Last Cabinet meeting

PM chaired the last meeting of the Union Cabinet at his South Block office on Friday.

In it, the Cabinet approved major infrastructure projects related to highways, railways, and metro rail worth over Rs 1.5 lakh crore. Projects pertaining to tunnelling and urban infrastructure were also approved.

NCP merger talks take a fresh turn

MRITYUNJAY BOSE
MUMBAI, DHNS

Merger talks between the NCP and NCP (SP) took a new turn when Shashikant Shinde, president of the Sharad Pawar-led faction, claimed that after reunification, the overall responsibilities would have rested with NCP national president Ajit Pawar.

Pawar died in an air crash on January 28.

"Fulfilling this merger and rebuilding the party with strength would have been the only true tribute to Ajit dada... It was our decision to hand over all party responsibilities to him once the merger process was complete. However, fate had other plans," said Shinde, an MLC from Satara.

On the June-July 2023 split in the NCP and the subsequent formation of the NCP (SP), he claimed that invisible forces, threats and conspiracies were behind the division.

Shinde's written opinion appeared in the February edition of 'Rashtravadi', the party magazine, in which he paid tributes to Ajit Pawar.

'INVISIBLE FORCES'

- Shashikant Shinde alleges 'invisible forces' behind 2023 split
- Says Ajit Pawar was compelled to form separate group
- Maha NCP chief Sunil Tatkare reaffirms commitment to NDA
- Tatkare calls Shinde's remarks 'not proper'

According to him, the late NCP president had been compelled to form a separate group against his original intentions.

He added that the process of "correcting past mistakes" had been underway for the past four to five months, with Ajit Pawar in dialogue with Sharad Pawar and senior NCP (SP) leader Jayant Patil to reunite the two factions.

"The dream of seeing both sides of the party come together under Ajit dada's leadership remains unfulfilled due to the intervention of fate," Shinde said.

Bengaluru Saturday, February 14, 2026 Pages 30 Vol 79 No 45 ₹8

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WHACKY VERSE
Bangla dash
So the results favour T Rahman
Who's out to avenge his apman.
Here, for Sheikh Hasina,
It's more exile and pasina
As Bangladeshis do his gunagan.

DH on Saturday

DECCAN HERALD
The Power of Good

Zimbabwe shock injury-hit Australia

Blessing Muzarabani grabs 4 wickets in 23-run win

P15

BNP returns to power in B'desh with sweeping win

Party crosses 210-mark, set to helm govt after 20 years under Tarique Rahman

SMITA SHARMA
DHAKA

The people of Bangladesh have spoken. They have given a strong mandate to the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) that presented a moderate and progressive position rejecting a radical Islamist alliance.

BNP won a landslide victory, crossing the 210-mark in the 299 seats of the Parliament or Jatiya Sangsad that were up for grabs. But it stayed away from dhol, crackers or victory processions. "Instead, we call upon the nation to observe a day of prayers today (February 13), seeking peace, stability and guidance for the future of Bangladesh," the party conveyed through social media platforms.

Chairman and prime minister elect Tarique Rehman went for Friday prayers in the quiet masjid at the highly secured Naval Colony and paid respects at his mother, the late Begum Khaleda Zia's grave.

According to unofficial results announced by the Election Commission, right-wing Jamaat-e-Islami, known to be close to Pakistan, secured 68 seats. The Awami League party of Hasina was barred from contesting the polls, which recorded 59.44% voter turnout.

The EC postponed the announcement of results in two seats - Chattogram-2 and Chattogram-4. The election in one seat was postponed due to a candidate's death.

BNP has returned to power after 20 years. It secured wins in several former strongholds of the Awami League which was not allowed to fight these elections. It swept all three seats in Gopalganj, the turf of Sheikh Hasina.

Gopalganj-3, with a large population of Bangladeshi Hindus, had elected Hasina seven times since 1991. This time, marking a ground shift, BNP's S M Zilani defeated independent candidate Gobinda Chandra Pramanik.

▸ Bangladesh, Page 3B
Rahman rises to lead B'desh, Page 11

BNP chairman Tarique Rahman leaves his residence after his party won the general election, in Dhaka on Friday. AFP

> "We thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi for congratulating our leader, Tarique Rahman. It is great that a democratic country is supposed to recognise the verdict of the people, and Mr Narendra Modi has done this.
>
> **NAZRUL ISLAM KHAN**
> Senior BNP leader

Modi congratulates Rahman on victory

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday spoke to Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) leader Tarique Rahman on his party's victory in the neighbouring country's parliamentary elections on Friday and extended India's continued commitment to the peace, progress and prosperity of the people of both countries.

BNP seeks Hasina extradition

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), which secured a landslide victory in the general elections, on Friday reiterated its firm stance on seeking the extradition of ousted former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina from India to face trial.

Six teens among 7 killed in chain accident near Hoskote

Speeding SUV hits bike, loses control and collides with container lorry

BENGALURU, DHNS

In a devastating serial accident on the Bengaluru Satellite Town Ring Road (STRR), six teenage students and another person were killed after a speeding SUV triggered a chain of collisions near M Satyavara in the early hours of Friday.

The accident occurred around 4.30 am.

Police said a Mahindra XUV700, carrying six students from various city-based educational institutions, was heading from Kothanur toward Devanahalli at a high speed.

Preliminary investigations suggested the SUV first crashed into a motorcycle ridden by 26-year-old Gagan, a factory supervisor from Devanahalli. The impact was fatal for Gagan, who died on the spot.

In a moment of panic following the initial hit, the car driver reportedly accelerated instead of braking. The SUV then veered wildly and crashed into the rear of a moving container truck. The collision was so violent that the SUV was wedged under the truck's chassis.

▸ Accident, Page 3B

The mangled remains of the SUV involved in the accident on Friday.

Sole breadwinner gone

The scene at the government hospital in Hoskote was heart-wrenching as parents and relatives of the victims arrived. Gagan, the sole breadwinner of his family, was returning home after his night shift when he was killed. "He was the only son...He worked night shifts to support his visually impaired mother," his uncle Devaraj said.

Gangotri: Bustling town, ghost town

Life is unusual in this Uttarakhand town, where the population drops to 50 in winter

Gangotri, a pilgrimage town in Uttarakhand's Uttarkashi district, draws lakhs of visitors during the summer months. Devotees flock to the Gangotri temple to offer prayers and take a dip in the river Bhagirathi.

However, little is known about life there in winter. In this week's Saturday Story, a journalist looks at what happens in the valley when temperatures drop to minus 15 degrees Celsius. The bustling tourist hub turns into a ghost town, with its population going down to 50. Only government officials, forest staff, and police remain.

Water pipes freeze, and the icy Bhagirathi becomes the only source of water. Vehicular movement is minimal. And in recent years, climate change is impacting winter patterns.

The SATURDAY STORY

Full story, Page 13

Today's issue includes DH Classifieds Supplement

SC seeks status report on Manipur violence

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Friday asked the CBI, which is probing 11 FIRs related to the 2023 Manipur ethnic violence cases, to submit a status report within two weeks.

A bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi also asked the Central and Manipur governments to honour the recommendations of the court-appointed Justice Gita Mittal Committee on rehabilitation and welfare of the victims, stating, 'the committee is a neutral umpire'.

The tenure of the committee has been extended till July 31.

Senior advocate Colin Gonsalves, representing a tribal body forum of the Kuki tribals, stated that two committees had been appointed and 27 reports have been filed in this court. But not a single copy has been made available, he said.

▸ Manipur, Page 3B

CM's name misused for transfer, probe on

BENGALURU, DHNS: The CMO has asked the Vidhana Soudha police to investigate the alleged misuse of Siddaramaiah's name for an unauthorised interdepartmental transfer. The direction was issued by Arun Furtado, Joint Secretary to the CM (Admin). P4

Plot to kill Pannun: Gupta pleads guilty

NEW YORK, REUTERS: Indian national Nikhil Gupta, charged with orchestrating an unsuccessful plot to kill Sikh separatist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, in New York pleaded guilty to three criminal charges, a spokesperson for the US Attorney's Office said. P11

K'taka pre-SIR drive: 3.74 cr voters mapped

BENGALURU, DHNS

A total of 3.74 crore voters, who are above and below the cut-off age of 40, have been mapped so far against the electoral rolls of 2002, when the last Special Intensive Revision (SIR) happened in Karnataka.

This mapping is a key prerequisite -- "a table-top exercise", is how an Election Commission (EC) official described it -- for a new SIR that is expected to take place in the state this year.

According to information provided to the Cabinet by the office of Chief Electoral Officer V Anbu Kumar, the Election Commission is expected to issue a notification on the SIR timeline in Karnataka soon.

ROLL REVISION

TOTAL ELECTORS

2002: 3,55,92,524 | 2025: 5,57,73,502

Cut-off age: 40	
Voters aged 40 mapped: **2,01,19,138**	**67.20%** Total percentage of mapping
Progeny aged 18, but below 40 mapped: **1,73,61,848**	

(As of February 13, 2026)

On Thursday, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's Cabinet asked the law department to study the proposed SIR, including its "various issues and consequences" and make recommendations.

The SIR in states like Bihar, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh have stirred a controversy.

After the SIR in 2002, Karnataka had 3.55 crore voters. The latest number of voters stands at 5.57 crore.

BLOs are mapping all voters from the 2002 rolls who are now above 40 years of age.

▸ SIR, Page 3B

BATTING FOR CRICKET

'Implementing 2 safety phases must for IPL at Chinnaswamy'

BENGALURU, DHNS

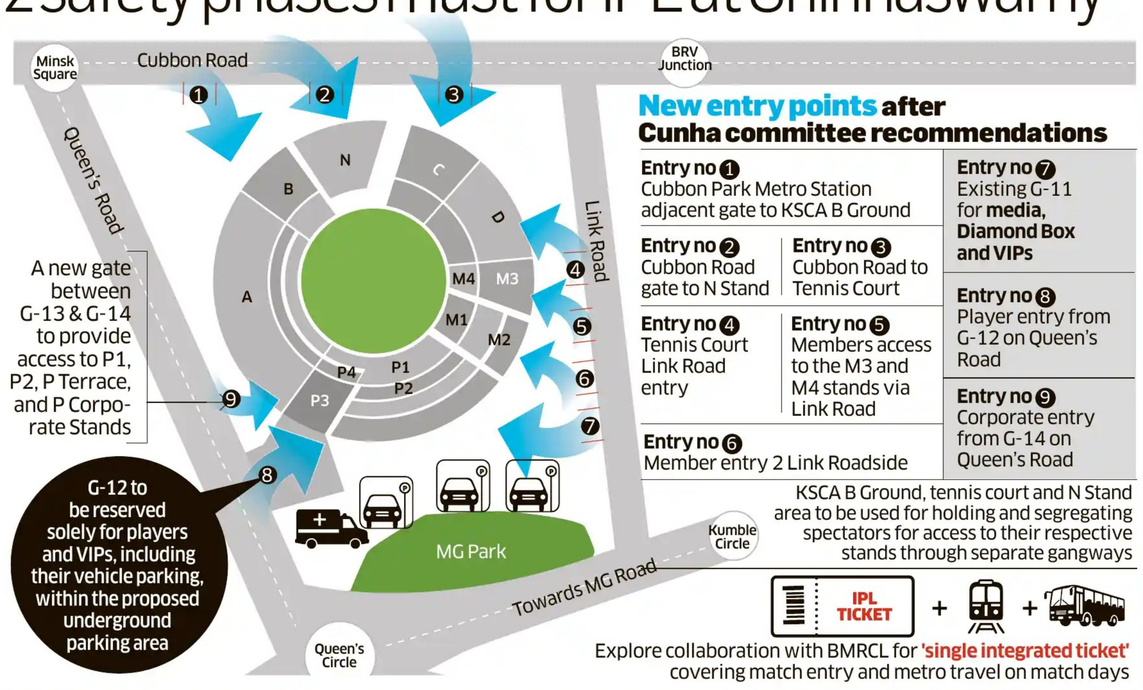
Home Minister G Parameshwara on Friday said the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) has been directed to implement safety measures at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in three parts, two of them before the IPL season begins.

"The first part has to be implemented immediately, the second is time-bound but has to be finished before the matches start, and the third is infrastructural, which will take time," he told reporters.

The state government had formed a committee chaired by M Maheshwar Rao, Chief Commissioner, GBA, to oversee the implementation of the Justice John Michael D'Cunha Commission report.

The Cunha commission had investigated the June 4, 2025, stampede outside the stadium that killed 11.

▸ Chinnaswamy, Page 3B


Minsk Square
Cubbon Road
BRV Junction
Queen's Road
Link Road
A new gate between G-13 & G-14 to provide access to P1, P2, P Terrace, and P Corporate Stands
G-12 to be reserved solely for players and VIPs, including their vehicle parking, within the proposed underground parking area
MG Park
Towards MG Road
Kumble Circle
Queen's Circle
New entry points after Cunha committee recommendations
Entry no 1 Cubbon Park Metro Station adjacent gate to KSCA B Ground
Entry no 2 Cubbon Road gate to N Stand
Entry no 3 Cubbon Road to Tennis Court
Entry no 4 Tennis Court Link Road entry
Entry no 5 Members access to the M3 and M4 stands via Link Road
Entry no 6 Member entry 2 Link Roadside
Entry no 7 Existing G-11 for media, Diamond Box and VIPs
Entry no 8 Player entry from G-12 on Queen's Road
Entry no 9 Corporate entry from G-14 on Queen's Road
KSCA B Ground, tennis court and N Stand area to be used for holding and segregating spectators for access to their respective stands through separate gangways
IPL TICKET
Explore collaboration with BMRCL for 'single integrated ticket' covering match entry and metro travel on match days

AI IMPACT SUMMIT भारत 2026 INDIA
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POLICY OVERHAUL

Auto-conversion of land: Promise and concerns

While experts welcome the transparency and efficiency, they caution against misuse and stress adherence to the Revised Master Plan 2015 regulations.

BENGALURU, DHNS

Recently, the state Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda's office issued a note stating that the government has done away with the requirement for separate land conversion in areas covered under the published master plan within the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) limits.

"Landowners who are developers may now directly apply for plan approval pursuant to the Master Plan, and land conversion will be carried out automatically as part of the plan approval process," said the note.

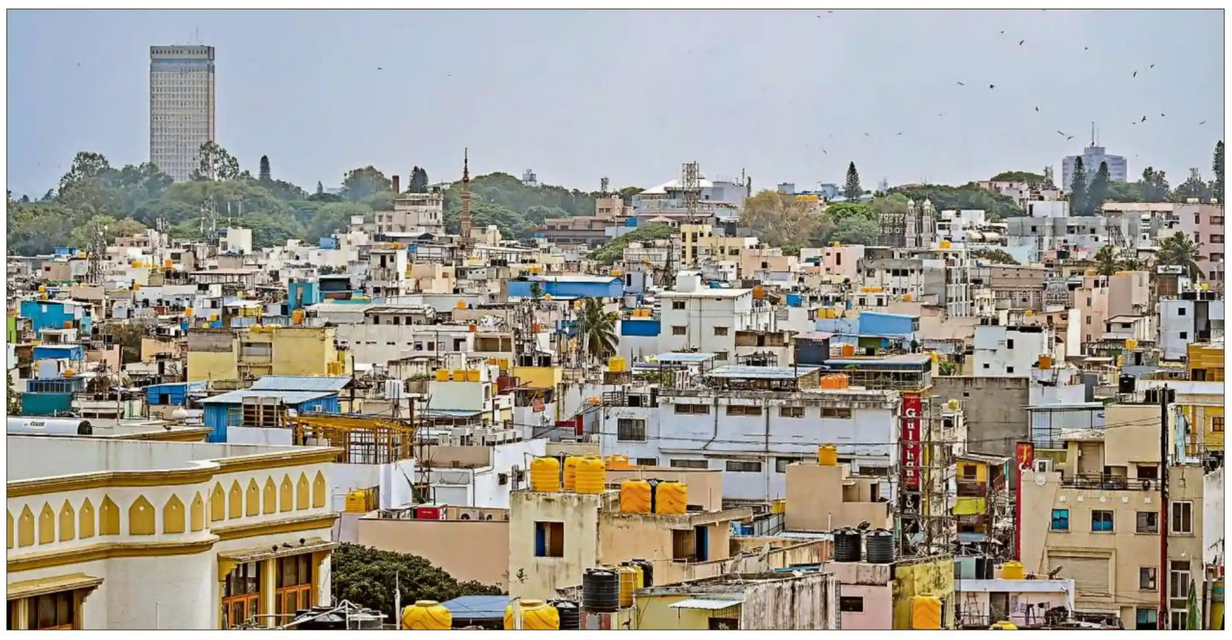
It said that under the master plan provisions, conversion from B Khatha to A Khatha for existing individual property owners is now permitted by law, providing significant relief to lakhs of GBA B Khatha site owners.

The step was projected to facilitate governance and compliance. "To promote planned development and improve ease of doing business, the government has introduced auto-conversion in master plan areas. Earlier, even lands falling within the master plan required separate conversion, despite the concept of "deemed conversion."

"This process typically took four to six months and often resulted in delays, harassment, corruption, and increased costs attributable to intermediaries," the note said.

These inefficiencies ultimately burdened site buyers and brought disrepute to government institutions, particularly the Revenue Department, according to the note. "With the rollout of auto-conversion in GBA, the Revenue Department has taken a decisive step to eliminate delays and harassment, reduce corruption and discretion, cut development costs and timelines and promote transparent, time-bound processes," it explains.

The note states that the "auto-conversion is a bold and transformative reform that simplifies one of the most complex and corruption-prone processes in land development," addressing the problem at the source.



An aerial view of the Pulakeshinagar area in Bengaluru. DH FILE PHOTO

B Khata angle

Officials say this reform facilitates faster, lawful, and more affordable land development, benefiting both developers and public site purchasers. They say the auto-conversion provision provides a legal framework to convert B Khatha properties into A Khatha, helping lakhs of property owners who purchased unauthorised sites in the past.

An A Khatha in Bengaluru serves as the property's seal of authenticity, proving legal ownership and enabling access to bank loans, especially from public banks such as the State Bank of India. It increases property values and simplifies transactions and approvals, officials say. The Revenue Department also plans to integrate auto-conversion with E-Khatha and digitised land records in order to reduce litigation and provide certainty in property ownership.

This is not the first time the government has taken steps to help B Khata property owners. The state cabinet recently approved a reform allowing B-Khata properties that came into existence before September 30, 2024, especially those in unauthorised layouts, to be converted to the full legal status of A-Khata.

B Khata made life difficult for property owners because it was not a genuine Khata certificate but merely an entry in the "B register" for tax collection. The recent campaign to obtain E Khata was applicable to B Khata properties as well, and has been made mandatory to obtain A Khata for the same properties.

With all the reforms, some experts believe it will be difficult to identify any illegality in property going forward, and those who committed it may also get away.

'Not a new step'

Vasanth Veerasagara, a resident of North Bengaluru and an active petitioner in a few cases, notes that court rulings state that land conversion is not required when the land falls within the master plan area. He cites Shrishail v. The State of Karnataka, a case from Bailahongal, Belagavi District, to support this point.

The land was previously used for agricultural purposes. The landowner obtained a conversion order in 2016 for non-agricultural, commercial use of the land for a petrol pump. He also set up a petrol pump on part of the land and later applied to the Town Municipal Council (TMC), Bailhongal, for permission to use the remaining land for commercial buildings (beyond the petrol pump).

The TMC refused, stating that the earlier conversion was limited to "petrol bunk" purposes and would not permit broader commercial use. In this case, the Karnataka High Court considered whether a municipal authority could restrict the use of land that had already been converted from agricultural to non-agricultural purposes.

The High Court held that once land falls within municipal limits, the strict requirement of conversion under the Karnataka Land Revenue Act loses significance because such land is treated as non-agricultural for municipal purposes.

The court further observed that when land has already been converted for commercial use, the authority cannot narrowly confine its use to the specific description mentioned in the earlier order, especially when the land has effectively lost its agricultural character.

Finding the municipal council's restriction unjustified, the Court quashed its endorsement and directed it to reconsider the petitioner's application for building permission in accordance with the law.

Thus, the Revenue Department's rule has already been applicable outside the GBA in various cities where the land falls within municipal limits or has a master plan that stipulates land uses. In Bengaluru, various private layouts are regularised by paying the DC conversion fee. There is no clarity on whether the fee still needs to be paid, but many steps required for conversion have been eliminated under the new rule.

The ruling also shows that a municipal authority cannot enforce narrow-use restrictions inconsistent with conversion status and municipal law.

Citizens welcome move, but with caution

"On the face of it, this is a welcome move. I hope the notification doesn't result in a stealth Akrama Sakrama, meaning that in the process of automatic conversion, hopefully illegalities won't be regularised," says Nitin Seshadri, a Koramangala resident who has been active in cases involving master plan violations.

R Rajagopalan, Convenor of Bengaluru Coalition, says: "Prima facie, from an ease of doing business point of view, it's a long-pending implementation of existing laws, an administrative correction that ensures 'deemed conversions' don't suffer in red tape."

"However, the current administration seems to favour its real estate well-wishers and has a tendency to promote less rigour in enforcement. It's essential that the CDP and RMP 2015 guidelines be reviewed prior to any such conversion to ensure land use complies with the law," he adds.

"Any illegal or revenue land plots (B Khata) must pay the fee, which should ideally be escrowed for proper facilities, civic amenities, and the development of the layout," he feels.

Applicability of the master plan

Questions have arisen regarding the applicability of the RMP-2015 to current cases, as it was intended to be replaced by a new plan that was never adopted by the government. However, legal experts clarify that RMP-2015 was prepared under the Karnataka Town and Country Planning (KTCP) Act, 1961, and is a statutory instrument governing land use and zoning in the Bengaluru metropolitan area.

An advocate who has led cases related to master plans says that RMP 2015 remains applicable to zoning rules and to the government's decision of auto-conversion.

Courts have repeatedly held that the zonal regulations and land-use classifications mentioned in the master plans are binding on local authorities (BBMP/BDA) in decisions on building plan approvals and related permissions. Experts explain that, since the government withdrew the proposed new plan, RMP-2031, it does not supersede RMP-2015.

Feedback:
pointblank@ deccanherald.co.in

METRO

Oral contraceptive use among young women jumps 20%

City doctors flag self-medication risks

AMULLYA SHIVASHANKAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

City doctors have reported a 20% rise in oral contraceptive pill use among women in their late teens and early 20s.

While some doctors point to rising awareness through sex education, others say peer pressure is influencing the choice.

Besides preventing unwanted pregnancies, combination contraceptive pills are also used to treat heavy bleeding, endometriosis and acne.

In a recent incident, a 19-year-old girl in Bengaluru consumed combination contraceptive pills to delay her menstrual cycle without consulting a doctor, which led to blood clots and her death.

Doctors said the use of contraceptive pills without medical consultation, based on information from the internet or peers, has become worrisome.

Dr Deepthi Ashwin, Consultant (Obstetrics and Gynaecology), said: "Self-medication of many drugs is common in the country, including oral contraceptive pills, especially when one has previously taken the drug or received advice from friends, pharmacists or the internet. Research has shown high rates of self-medication behaviour among the Indian urban and student population."

Over-the-counter and unprescribed medication has also led to serious health emergencies.

Dr Sowmya KN, Consultant (Obstetrics and Gynaecology), said: "While some risks are minor such as headache and weight gain, serious cases can include formation of blood clots, heavy bleeding and other complications."

Doctors also note that emergency contraceptive pills, meant strictly for emergencies, are being used repeatedly.

"Many young women are using emergency contraceptive pills repeatedly instead of regular contraception due to misconceptions that it is safe for regular use. They are meant only for occasional use after unprotected sex or contraceptive failure," said Dr Gayathri Karthik Nagesh, Senior Consultant (Obstetrics and Gynaecology).

Doctors said the shift towards self-medication also reflects how pre-marital sex and menstruation remain taboo.

Dr Deepthi said: "Stigma and privacy are strong factors. Cultural taboos around pre-marital sex, fear of judgment from service providers, and stigma within families push young people towards anonymous sources, increasing the risk of misuse and lack of safety checks."

DR DEEPTHI ASHWIN
Consultant (Obstetrics & Gynaecology)

"Self-medication of many drugs is common in the country, including oral contraceptive pills, especially when one has previously taken the drug or received advice from friends, pharmacists or the internet. Research has shown high rates of self-medication behaviour among the Indian urban and student population.

When love stays domestic, roses get expensive

Strong local demand pushes prices to Rs 80–120 per stem

ASHWIN BM
BENGALURU, DHNS

A woman joyfully buys flowers, and the vendor just as happy on the eve of Valentine's Eve, on Friday. DH PHOTO/BK JANARDHAN

As the city gears up for Valentine's Day, roses are in high demand with steeper prices.

Unseasonal weather in Tamil Nadu delayed production by 10 days, but flower hubs near Bengaluru — Nelamangala, Devanahalli and Hoskote — have filled the market.

Despite adequate supply, retail prices for red roses have surged to Rs 80-120 per stem in high-demand areas such as Indiranagar and Koramangala, nearly tripling usual rates.

The domestic market is now the main growth driver.

TM Aravind, president of the South India Floriculture Association (SIFA), said exports now account for only 10-15 per cent of total production, down from previous years.

"In countries like Kenya or Israel, 90 per cent of the produce is exported. Here, high cargo costs and the 18 per cent GST on freight have limited global reach," Aravind said.

He urged the government to withdraw GST and provide cargo subsidies to help the industry become fully organised.

Currently, premium 'Taj Mahal' red roses fetch Rs 30-35 per stem wholesale, while 'Gold Strike' yellow and dark pink varieties trade at Rs 20-25.

The 2026 season has highlighted the rise of quick commerce, with platforms such as BigBasket, Zepto and Swiggy Instamart reporting increased orders.

This has allowed consumers to bypass traditional markets, though it has added pressure on retail stocks, further driving up prices for last-minute shoppers.

Valentine's week pricing

- Single rose (Retail) Rs 80-120
- Bouquet of 10 roses Rs 500-800

APD's Valentine Garden Fair boosts disabled youth's financial independence

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Association of People with Disability (APD) on Friday launched its annual Valentine Garden Fair at Doddagubbi, promoting financial independence among 150 youth with disabilities.

The fair, which runs until February 22, showcases the horticultural skills of students from APD's residential livelihood programme. Trainees handle every stage, from nurturing saplings to garden management, preparing them for roles as gardeners and supervisors in corporate offices and residential hubs.

Inaugurating the event, M Jagadeesh, Additional Director of Horticulture (Lalbagh), lauded the quality of the plants on display. The fair features orchids, medicinal herbs and flowering foliage.

The event follows a cycle-of-giving model. Proceeds from the sale of plants and accessories are reinvested into the programme to provide food, shelter and training for the next batch. APD has empowered over 4,500 youth across Karnataka through the initiative.

Visitors are encouraged to bring their own carry bags to support the campus' plastic-free environment.

M Jagadeesh, Additional Director of Horticulture (Lalbagh), inaugurates the Valentine Garden Fair at Doddagubbi on Friday.

IN THE CITY

GENERAL

Science Exhibition: Dr Anjanappa, Laggere Narayana Swamy, Mallesh Gowda to attend; Rajiv Gandhi Public School, Laggere; 9.30 am.

Science Exhibition: 'Science Beyond Sight', science rxhibition by visually impaired students; Deepa Academy for the Differently Abled, BEL Layout; 10 am.

Endowment Lecture: 'Jaimini Bharata: Feminist Perspectives'; Shivananda Tavali, SL Manjunath, BM Pratishtana to attend; MVC Hall, NR Colony; 5 pm.

Book Release: Narasimhamurthy Hoovinahalli's 'Tumbi Banditta: A Study of Bendre's Poetry'; Woode P Krishna, HS Raghavendra Rao, Rajappa Dalavayi; Seshadripuram Evening College, Seshadripuram; 6 pm.

CULTURAL

Music Programme: 'Sur Sandhya'; Kavita Krishnamurthy, Nagachandrika Bhat, Samanvita Sharma, Shruti Bhide, Aaroh Shankar, Surojit Guha; Prestige Centre for Performing Arts, Konanakunte; 6 pm.

RELIGIOUS

Harikatha: 'Bhoo Kailasa' Harikatha by Anagha Prasad, Madhusudan, Vasanth; Seshadripuram Vanitha Vrinda, Seshadripuram; 7 pm.

CITY WEATHER

FORECAST
Mainly clear sky

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	31.0°C
Minimum	17.0°C
Rainfall	--
Humidity	44%
Sunset (Feb 14)	6:25 pm
Sunrise (Feb 15)	6:43 am
Moonrise	3:21 am
Moonset	2:48 pm

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

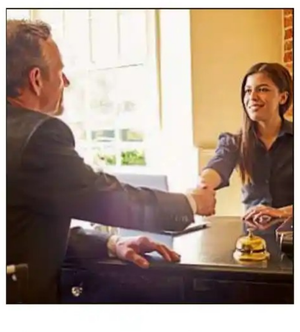
Invites to be published in this column should be sent to: **incitytoday @deccanherald.co.in.** Please note that hard copies will not be accepted

Hotel room prices surge on V-Day, but demand stays below par

BENGALURU, DHNS: Ahead of the Valentine's Day weekend, hotel room prices across the city have risen, though demand remains below expectation in parts of the Central Business District.

A popular hotel chain has increased prices due to higher demand. A double occupancy room at one of its hotels on MG Road is priced at Rs 5,200, about Rs 2,000 more than average. A similar trend is seen across the CBD, in areas like Halasuru and Indiranagar.

"Since it is both Valentine's Day and a weekend, it is expected that the prices will be higher than normal. People don't shy away from paying a little extra on such occasions," a manager at the hotel told *DH*.



However, until Friday evening, multiple hotels in the CBD were underbooked.

"Usually, by now, we should've been fully booked, especially since it is a weekend. But we haven't seen great demand, despite not hiking up the prices by much. Compared to 2023, the demand is below satisfactory this year. Our Valentine's Day party, too, hasn't received the response we expected," shared an employee of a premium hotel on MG Road.

In comparison, hotels on the outskirts have seen higher demand.

A hotel in Devanahalli has only two vacant rooms for the weekend after a surge in online bookings. A double occupancy room there is priced at Rs 3,500 on February 14 and 15, about Rs 1,000 more than average.

"Our management has decided that we will not allow unmarried couples at the hotel. As a preventive measure, we are asking for proof of marriage, such as a passport," shared an employee of a hotel in Whitefield. Another hotel in Richmond Town also stated the same criteria.

Govt allows joint commissioners to approve 'A' khata conversion requests

Hopes to expedite clearance of 7,000 pending applications

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

In a bid to fast-track the conversion of 'B' khata to 'A' khata, the state government has empowered joint commissioners (JCs) of all five municipal corporations in Bengaluru to approve requests for plots measuring up to 1,000 square metres (one gunta).

The delegation of powers is aimed at clearing around 7,000 pending applications, as commissioners had been delaying decisions.

Under Section 81 of the Karnataka Town and Country Planning Act, the power to approve single plots measuring up to 10,000 square metres (2.5 acres) vests with the commissioners of the five municipal corporations.

After the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) launched a new scheme allowing 'B' khata property owners to apply for 'A' khata by paying 5% of the guidance value, the civic body received about 7,000 applications within 100 days.

To clear these applications in the interest of public convenience, the government has now authorised joint commissioners to issue 'A' khata for plots measuring up to 10 guntas. The decision to delegate powers was reportedly taken due to delays by commissioners in clearing files.

Officials said each application generates approximately Rs 3 lakh in revenue. While the civic body stands to earn about Rs 200 crore from the 7,000 applications, it expects another 20,000 applications by the end of the year.

Before issuing 'A' khata under the new scheme — which partly falls under the erstwhile Akrama Sakrama initiative — joint commissioners or revenue officials must inspect the plot to verify whether land has been relinquished to the government for public use, whether it falls within the buffer zone of a waterbody or stormwater drain, and whether it has proper road access.

A resident of south Bengaluru who owns a 50x80 plot said he paid Rs 8.5 lakh to convert his 'B' khata property to 'A' khata. "The fee is definitely on the higher side, but 'A' khata does add value to the property," he said.

While 'A' khata is issued to sites formed in layouts approved by the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA), a majority of properties on the city's outskirts fall under 'B' khata due to the lack of statutory approvals such as DC conversion and change of land use (CLU).

The new scheme seeks to address this gap; however, property owners will continue to be deprived of parks, playgrounds and civic amenities available in approved layouts.

Officials added that the revenue generated from khata conversions will be used for infrastructure works, particularly to address traffic congestion.

Parents' murder: My brother is innocent, says techie's sister

MANJUNATH SHETTAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

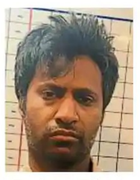
The sister of Rohan Chandra Bhat, 33, a US-returned techie arrested for killing his parents in their Bengaluru home on February 11, believes he is innocent.

Rashmi Chandra Bhat, 31, who arrived from the US on Friday, has even moved a Bengaluru court, requesting that her brother be allowed to attend and perform their parents' last rites as he is their only son, police sources in the know said.

"In her statement before the police, she maintained that her brother is innocent and has sought the court's intervention to allow him to conduct the rituals in accordance with family customs," a police officer said.

Rohan is currently under treatment and observation at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (Nimhans). Investigators from the HAL police station said they were awaiting a medical fitness certificate from Nimhans before seeking his custody for detailed interrogation.

Police are also waiting for the post-mortem report and other forensic findings as part of the investigation. Based on Rashmi's request, the post-mortem will be conducted on Saturday, and the bodies will be handed over to the family for the final rites thereafter.



Rohan Bhat

Rohan allegedly stabbed his parents — Naveen Chandra Bhat (60), a retired Indian Navy captain, and Shyamala Bhat, (55), a dentist — in their villa in a gated community in Vignan Nagar, near HAL. The family is originally from Mangaluru and moved to Bengaluru more than 20 years ago.

Police said Rohan had been under treatment for depression and was diagnosed with Schizophrenia (psychosis).

Preliminary investigations revealed that frequent quarrels between him and his father over unemployment led to the twin murders that sent shockwaves through the city. However, police are probing other angles, too.

What the law says

Senior counsel P Prasanna Kumar said: "This appears to be a very peculiar situation. Courts may grant permission to an accused person to perform the last rites of their parents. However, in this case, the accused himself is alleged to have killed his parents. That makes it legally and morally complex.

"The act of a son or daughter killing their own parents is termed parricide. (Ancient Roman law regarded parricide as a threat to society and therefore, the perpetrator was denied all his rights). It is a rare crime, accounting for roughly 1-4% of all homicide cases globally.

"Given the nature of the offence, I am not sure whether the court would permit him to perform the final rites. In my opinion, the gravity of parricide may outweigh the religious obligations ordinarily associated with performing a parent's last rites. Ultimately, it will depend on the court's assessment, including factors such as the accused's mental condition."

RERA orders seldom help; homebuyers left in limbo

Why Is RERA called a 'paper tiger'?

- Conceived as a speedy dispute-resolution mechanism, RERA is increasingly described by petitioners as a "paper tiger".
- Delays are reported at every stage – from admission of complaints and hearings to uploading orders and executing them.
- Once a Revenue Recovery Certificate (RRC) is issued, the matter moves to the Revenue Department, where files often remain pending for months, sometimes years.

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

Carrying the dream of owning a home, Nikhil N booked an under-construction flat in Jakkur in 2012 and paid nearly 90% of the cost by 2015.

When the builder failed to deliver despite repeated extensions, the marketing professional approached Karnataka's Real Estate Regulatory Authority (K-RERA) in 2018.

A year later, RERA ordered a refund with interest.

But recovery proceedings stalled at the tahsildar's office. Nikhil then moved the Karnataka High Court, only to lose on technical grounds: the order had been passed by the adjudicating officer, not the authority itself.

In 2023, he filed a fresh plea before RERA. The chairman ordered repayment of around Rs 40 lakh with interest and penalty. Yet again, the file got stuck in the Revenue Department. Left with little choice, Nikhil has returned to the High Court. The matter is listed for hearing later this month.

His case mirrors the ordeal of hundreds of homebuyers across Karnataka.

Since its formation in July 2017, K-RERA has passed recovery orders in 2,338 cases. However, only 291 homebuyers — about 12.45% — have secured actual relief. For the rest, enforcement remains elusive.

Conceived as a speedy dispute-resolution mechanism, RERA is increasingly described by petitioners as a "paper tiger". Delays are reported at every stage — from admission of complaints and hearings to uploading orders and executing them. Once a Revenue Recovery Certificate (RRC) is issued, the matter moves to the Revenue Department, where files often remain pending for months, sometimes years.

Even the Supreme Court has voiced concern.

A bench led by Chief Justice Surya Kant observed that it was high time state governments revisited the constitution and functioning of RERA bodies, noting that beneficiaries of the law appeared "depressed, disgusted and disappointed". In strong remarks, the court said that if the institution was not serving its purpose, "it is better to abolish it".

Homebuyers argue that RERA has the power to deny registration of new projects to developers who fail to comply with its orders. Yet this provision is rarely enforced.

Extensions granted to builders for project delays are often generous. Moreover, RERA Karnataka has never published its mandatory annual report, as required under Section 78 of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016.

MS Shankar, convener of Fight for RERA, said regulatory authorities across states had lost their sheen, but Karnataka's RERA was the "worst of all".

"More than 2,000 cases are awaiting refunds. Developers facing multiple complaints can be barred from registering new projects. Yet this provision is seldom invoked," he said.

Prominent businessman Mohandas Pai said institutions created with good intent had become instruments of corruption and rent-seeking.

"RERA is mandated to dispose of complaints within 60 days. It has, however, been captured by builders. When there is a rate card for approvals, how can there be justice?" he asked.

Priests offer prayers ahead of Mahashivaratri at Shivoham Temple in the city on Friday. PTI

All-night chants, bhajans & meditation organised for Shivaratri this weekend

BENGALURU, DHNS: Organisations and institutions across the city are hosting a range of events for Shivaratri this weekend.

Bhajan jamming

An immersive musical and meditative experience curated by Bangalore Meditates on the night of Shivaratri, this event blends collective bhajan singing with live unplugged band accompaniment and a full moon meditation session.

It will be held on Sunday at 6 pm at Bloom Creative Zone, Haralur. Tickets available online.

Live from Isha

Though hosted at the Isha Yoga Centre in Coimbatore, the all-night event will also be live-streamed. The event begins at 6 pm on Sunday and concludes at 6 am the next day. The night-long event features musical performances, mantra recitations and guided meditation. Details on isha.sadhguru.org.

Mindful celebrations

The Art of Living International Centre is hosting a special Shivaratri celebration focused on meditation, mantra and mindful awakening on Sunday. Though the broader programme includes pujas, the highlight is the evening-to-night meditation sessions, mantra chanting and guided reflective practice. Details on artofliving.org.

Traffic diversions for Mahashivaratri

BENGALURU, DHNS: The traffic police have issued a traffic advisory for Sunday and Monday, notifying major diversions and parking curbs near prominent temples and cemeteries to accommodate Mahashivaratri celebrations.

Pulakeshinagar

From 2 pm on Sunday to 10 pm on Monday, traffic movement around the Kalpalli cemetery will be restricted. Vehicles from Jeevanahalli and Charles Campbell Road must detour via the Jeevanahalli underbridge and Doddagunta Circle to reach Old Madras Road. Traffic from Baiyappanahalli toward Cox Town is redirected via Doddabanaswadi Main Road. Parking is strictly prohibited on both sides of Kalpalli Road.

JB Nagar & Indiranagar

The Smashana Kali Temple festival will see CMH Road completely closed between Adarsha and Shanthi Sagara junctions on Monday (8 am–10 pm). Commuters heading toward BM Sri Junction are advised to use Anjaneya Junction and Old Madras Road. Parking is banned along the entire stretch.

The BTP has urged the public to plan their travel in advance and follow the designated alternative routes.

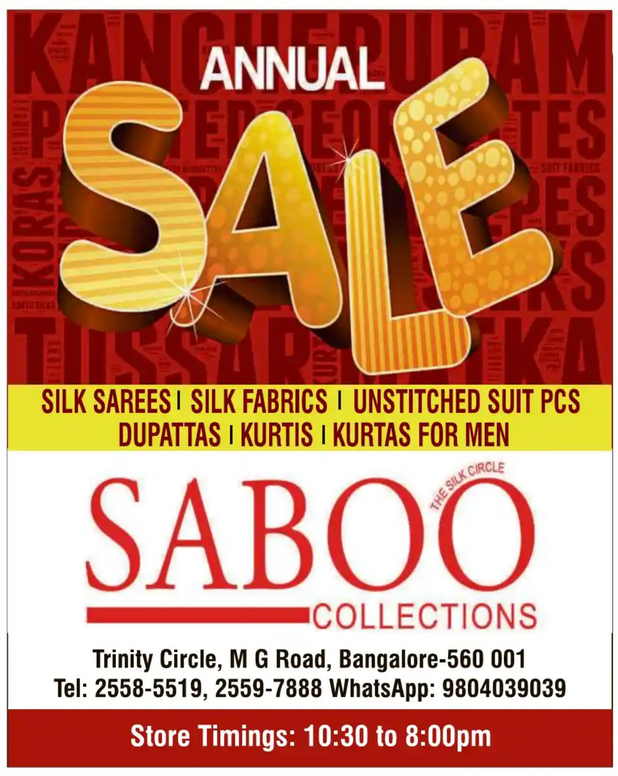
GBA bans meat sale tomorrow

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has announced a ban on animal slaughter and the sale of meat on the occasion of Mahashivaratri.

The festival falls on February 15 (Sunday).

In an order issued by the GBA deputy director of the Animal Husbandry Department, the ban is applicable to all meat shops and slaughterhouses in its jurisdiction.

Any violations could lead to strict enforcement actions by the authorities.


ANNUAL
SALE
SILK SAREES I SILK FABRICS I UNSTITCHED SUIT PCS
DUPATTAS I KURTIS I KURTAS FOR MEN
SABOO
THE SILK CIRCLE
COLLECTIONS
Trinity Circle, M G Road, Bangalore-560 001
Tel: 2558-5519, 2559-7888 WhatsApp: 9804039039
Store Timings: 10:30 to 8:00pm

Office of the Director of Health Services
Medical Education & Research (DME), Meghalaya
Government of Meghalaya
Pasteur Hills, Shillong

Email ID: pasteurinstituteshil@gmail.com Tel No. 0364-2591510 / 94851 06663

No.DHSME&R/SMC/Tender/V/06/2025-26/520 Dtd: Shillong, the 11th February, 2026

EXTENSION NOTICE

In continuation of the NIT No. DHSME&R/SMC/TENDER/IV/20/2025/10033 dated 10th December, 2025 for procurement of equipment/items for the **SKILL LABORATORY**. Shillong Medical College, it is hereby notified that the last date and time for submission of bids is extended up to **20th February, 2026** at 15:00 hours, on account of limited submission of bids.

All other terms and conditions of the tender shall remain unchanged.

Sd/-
Director of Health Services
Medical Education & Research (DME)
Meghalaya, Pasteur Hills, Shillong

MIPR No. : 2802
Dated on : 11/02/2026

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA

CORRIGENDUM

No.EDN.46/2025/67 Dated: Shillong, the 12th February, 2026

Reference: Public Notice **No. EDN 46/2025/31**, dated **26th March 2025**, issued by the Education Department, Government of Meghalaya.

In pursuant to the Order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 09/12/2025, public notice is hereby given that the University Grants Commission (UGC) holds exclusive jurisdiction over all grievances concerning the validity of degrees and related matters. In light of the Supreme Court upholding the 2014 dissolution order, any claims regarding degree validation must strictly adhere to the directives issued in the 09/12/2025 judgment.

The issue relating to the validity of degrees awarded by CMJ University shall be examined and decided exclusively by the University Grants Commission (UGC), being the statutory regulatory authority, and all claims, objections, or grievances of students concerning such validity are to be addressed only before the UGC.

This corrigendum is issued for general information, public notice, and strict compliance by all concerned, including students, employers, and other stakeholders, and shall be read as part of all relevant earlier notifications to the extent stated herein.

Sd/-
(Shri D. Lyngdoh)
(Administrator of CMJ University, Meghalaya)
(Contact No: 0364-221 226)

MIPR No. : 2811
Dated : 13/02/2026

4 transport officials under scanner for fitness certificate fraud

Questions raised over issuance of 10K FCs in six months

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

The president of the Karnataka State Private Transport Associations has lodged a complaint with the Commissioner of Transport and Road Safety, alleging large-scale irregularities in the issuance of Fitness Certificates (FC) to nearly 10,000 out-of-state vehicles over a six-month period.

In a letter submitted to the Transport Department on February 12, S Nataraja Sharma accused certain Inspectors of Motor Vehicles (IMVs) of mechanically issuing FCs without conducting mandatory physical inspections as required under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, and the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989.

The complaint names Senior IMV Nissar Ahmed and IMVs H M Manjunath, A A Khan and Narasimha Reddy. It alleges that between August 2025 and January 2026, an "unusually high number of vehicles" registered in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Kerala were certified within short spans of time.

According to the figures cited, 646 FCs were issued in August 2025; 1,168 in September; 1,813 in October; 3,383 in November; 2,057 in December and 955 in January 2026.

A majority of these certificates are alleged to have been issued by a single officer, predominantly for vehicles from Maharashtra and Gujarat, Sharma said.

He also questioned whether mandatory checks such as brake testing, emission verification, structural compliance and safety equipment inspection were actually conducted, given the volume of certifications, urging the Transport Department to carry out a thorough investigation by examining CCTV footage, Vahan portal records and manual registers.

"My sources filed an RTI application through which we were able to get hands-on data which points towards wrongdoings. It is alleged that there are 155 such inspectors who might be guilty but I don't have data to prove that. Once I get data, I will file a complaint on the rest," Sharma told *DH*.

Investigation in progress

The Transport Department is currently carrying out an investigation on the basis of the complaint.
Among the four accused, Nissar Ahmed was already suspended in January for illegally issuing FCs to Gujarat-registered vehicles without physical inspections.

"He was found to be guilty and immediately suspended a few days before his retirement," said Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy, adding that the department had already begun investigating the remaining three IMVs once the letter was receIved.

"I've given them 15 days time to investigate. The complaint might claim 10,000 vehicles but we will do our own investigation," he said.

He also added that while geofencing has been installed at transport offices across Bengaluru, offices across the state are likely to get it by February 20. Geofencing is a location-based service that creates a virtual, software-defined boundary around a physical geographic area using GPS and WiFi. "Once we have it installed everywhere, it will not be possible to provide FCs without physical examination," he added.

HC stays probe against owner of Lamborghini seized for cheating and forgery

BENGALURU, DHNS

The High Court of Karnataka has stayed further investigation against the owner of a Lamborghini Huracan, which was seized and towed away from the house garage by a senior motor vehicle inspector.

While the petitioner, H1 Car Care in Sahakarnagar, claimed to have paid Rs 1 crore in GST and Rs 60 lakh in road tax, the Transport Department alleged the offences of cheating and forgery with respect to the registration.

The petitioner, an automobile body part dealer, submitted that the car was purchased from Hoysala Automotives Pvt Ltd on September 1, 2025, at Rs 3,00,68,729.

According to the petitioner, the 2021-made car was first sold to Harsha Infra Cons Pvt Ltd in 2022 with temporary certificate of registration. It had sought permission to obtain permanent registration in Telangana. The car was returned to Hoysala Automotives without registering in Telangana and being used as a Demo Vehicle until the petitioner purchased it in 2025.

The petitioner claimed to have followed the due registration process with the Indiranagar RTO by paying all taxes.

However, on February 7, 2026, Ranjith N, senior motor vehicle inspector, along with other officers, entered the house garage of the petitioner and seized the vehicle without any prior notice, the petitioner said.

The petitioner came to know that the vehicle was handed over to the Yelahanka New Town police station, and that an FIR has been registered for offences under BNS sections 318(4) and 336(3) for cheating and forgery.

During the hearing, the state public prosecutor contended that the owners of the vehicle had forged and caused loss to the state in the registration process. On the instructions of the motor vehicle inspector, the SPP submitted that once the crime is registered, a senior motor vehicle inspector is empowered to seize the vehicle.

At this stage, the court asked as to why RTO officers are not accused in the case and only the car owner is made an accused. To this, the SPP submitted that every person involved in the transaction will be brought to books.

"Insofar as the contention that the Senior Motor Vehicle Inspector, the complainant, had power to himself go, seize and tow the vehicle and place it at various police stations, is concerned, this court could await a reply from the State Public Prosecutor," Justice Nagaprasanna said, while posting the matter to be re-listed on February 18.

51 girls fall sick at residential school in Chitradurga

HIRIYUR (CHITRADURGA DISTRICT), DHNS: As many as 51 girls at Kittur Rani Chennamma Residential School in Aimangala village in Hiriyur taluk of Chitradurga district took ill possibly after consumption of contaminated food or water on Thursday night.

Of the 51 girls, 26 are being treated at the Maradihalli Community Health Centre, and seven have been shifted to district hospital in Chitradurga. The others were treated at the school hostel.

Although the exact cause of the sudden illness among the girls is yet to be ascertained, Health Officer Dr Vijay Shanke suspects it could have been brought about either by food poisoning or consumption of contaminated water.

"Blood and urine samples collected from the girls have been sent to the laboratory for analysis. We will know what caused the illness once we get the results of the tests," he added.

AI in health care system: 'Innovation cannot outrun accountability'

AMULLYA SHIVASHANKAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

As India's digital health mission matures beyond appointment-booking apps and teleconsultations, a quieter but more consequential shift is underway starting from access to accuracy.

The next phase is not about scaling downloads, but about validating algorithms. With AI poised to read X-rays, interpret biomedical signals and guide clinical decisions at scale, questions of safety, transparency and scientific rigour are moving to the forefront.

A part of this transition is Omprakash Subbarao, chief of CORE Labs at IISc and advisor to National Health Authority, helping shape how AI enters India's public health system not as a black box, but as a tool that must earn trust before it earns reach.

Omprakash Subbarao

In an interview to *Amullya Shivashankar* of *DH*, Subbarao stressed the scientific validation, safety frameworks and regulatory guardrails for AI before population-scale deployment.

What are the real public-health risks of deploying opaque AI models at national scale?
Along with opacity, accountability of opacity makes AI risky. Large health systems, regardless of whether they are human or AI-based, can be risky if their underlying decision processes cannot be scrutinised. Implementing AI through models including appropriate levels of transparency, accountability and human oversight is crucial. It should be decision-supporting, not decision-replacing system.

How far are today's biomedical signals from being clinically reliable in Indian conditions?
The progress is more than what is recognised. The diversity of India, be it, psychologic or environmental and others suggests that worldwide datasets may not have captured the true reality. Indian research organisations play an important role, here, due to their access to empirical evidence that apply directly to Indian context as an important precursor to translating biomedical signals into dependable clinical applications.

Is India's regulatory system capable of evaluating AI safety beyond accuracy metrics?
As India is in the process of changing its regulatory system, the importance will be placed on safety, bias, functioning of AI and its monitoring systems. The greatest strength lies in adoption rather than pausing innovation through an inflexible regulatory framework at an early stage.

If India gets AI in healthcare wrong now, what long-term damage could it do?
Public trust. Approaching healthcare AI with humility and accountability will actively build public trust, advancing innovation and improving care, but transparency is the key. Achieving correctness does not involve merely avoiding making errors, but acknowledging limits, correcting one's direction when needed and allowing humans to be part of the system.

Who should be accountable when a "black box" medical AI fails?
The accountability has to be shared across the table including clinicians, regulators, institutions and systems of care. When responsibility is shared across the board such as developers, implementers and public authorities, it creates a clearer pathway for innovation with responsibility. This being a collaborative effort will focus towards shared responsibility and safeguards patient interests while technological progress continues at scale.

S&T WORKS IN LUMDING DIVISION

E-Tender No.: SNT-40-LMG-2025-26; Dated: 11-02-2026; E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work; **Name of work :** Reliability improvement by restoration/replacement/upgradation of Telecom Gears under SSE/Tele/IC/ Guwahati of Lumding Division. **Tender Value:** ₹52,33,633.85/-; **Bid Security**: ₹1,04,700/-; Date & time of **closing** of tender at **15:00** hours and **opening** at **15:30** hours on **06-03-2026**. Complete information alongwith the tender document of above e-tender will be available in the website **www.ireps.gov.in**

DSTE, Lumding
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
Follow us on @SCRailwayindia
Details of the Tender Notices of S.C Railway can be seen on our website : www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in
TENDER NOTICE
PUB/1936

On Behalf of The President of India, Sr.Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer, Secunderabad Division, South Central Railway, Secunderabad Invites Open Tenders For The Following Works Through E-Procurement of The Tenders

1. Tender No. & Date: C_SG_36_591 Dt:10/02/2026 Closing dt:04/03/2026 **Name of the work :** 1. S&T arrangements at proposed yard modifications at SIRPUR TOWN STATION in view of Iron ore siding, two number of ballast sidings and Yard remodelling. IRPSM NO.11.05.16.25.3.54.015 of 2025.26 2. S&T arrangements inconnection with Extension of Raghavapuram (RGPM) station shunting neck on KZJ-BPQ section (IRPSM ID: 11.05.16.25.3.54.001 **Approx Value :** (₹) 4,79,77,342.18 **Bid security EMD** (₹) 3,89,900/-

For further details visit the website **www.ireps.gov.in**.

Sr.Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer, A2461 Co-ord/Secunderabad

For further tender conditions / details and for downloading the tender documents, Please visit website at https://www.ireps.gov.in or www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in

Metro Railway, Kolkata

Tender Notice for e-tendering is invited by Principal Chief Engineer, Metro Railway, Kolkata for and on behalf of the President of India for the following work: **Name of work:** Supply, fixing, commissioning & maintenance of Rail Gauge face lubricator machine at Blue Line (Station Dakshineswar to Station Kavi Subhash) of Metro Railway, Kolkata. **Approx Cost of Work:** ₹ 5,88,99,616.20, **Earnest Money:** ₹ 4,44,500/-. **Completion Period:** 60 Months, **Date and Time of Closing:** 06.03.2026 at 12:00 hrs. The Tender Document and other details can be obtained from the website **www.ireps.gov.in.** Amendments/ Corrigendum,if any, would be hosted only on the website.

Abridged e-Tender Notice No.: Civil-2547-2026-Recall (Open)

Follow us at: /metrorailwaykol /metrorailkolkata

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
NOTIFICATION
Hubballi, the 4th February, 2026

S.O. 558(E) - In exercise of the powers conferred by clause 37(A) of Section 2 of the Railways Act, 1989 (Act no. 24 of 1989) the Ministry of Railway (South Western Railway, Hubballi) hereby notifies the project, as **"Special Railway Project"** mentioned in the table below, in the State of Karnataka for providing National Infrastructure for a Public Purpose with effect from date of publication of the notification in the Official Gazette.

SN	Name of the Project	Name of Village	Taluk	District
1	"Bangalore City-Jolarpettai-Construction of Road Over Bridge in lieu of LC No. 112 at Km 273/100-200 between station Kamasamudram - Bisanattam."	Kamasamudram	Bangarpet	Kolar

[F.No.SWR/W.352/ROBs-RSP/Land/2025-26]

For details log on : https://egazette.gov.in

NINGAPPA CHANDAPPA CHALUWADI,
Deputy Chief Engineer/Road Over Bridgs, Road Safety Projects/ Hubballi
PUB/895/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26

Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform tickets, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.

South Western Railway - SWR SWRRLY @SWRAILWAYHQ @sw_railways

Metro Railway, Kolkata

Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer/Project, Metro Railway, Kolkata for & on behalf of The President of India invites e-Tenders against Open Tender due to open on 09.03.2026 at 15:00 hrs. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. **Name of Work:** Rehabilitation, Augmentation for dual Track detection at KMUK RRI Yard, KKVS RRI Yard & KNCS yard in Blue line of Metro Railway, Kolkata. **Tender Value:** Rs. 5,32,46,360.11. **Earnest Money:** Rs. 4,16,200/-. **Completion Period:** 12 Months. The tender can be viewed at website **https://www.ireps.gov.in** The tenderer/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate & must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/bidders can participate on e-Tendering. All relevant papers must be uploaded at the time of participating in e-Tender.

Open Tender Notice No. : S&T/Work/12-2026

Follow us at: /metrorailwaykol /metrorailkolkata

S. E. RAILWAY – E-TENDER

Tender Notice No.: PCMM/GENL/TP/2026/05, dated 13.02.2026. Open e-Tenders for "E" Procurement system are invited by Principal Chief Materials Manager, S.E.Railway, Headquarters Office (5th Floor), New Administrative Building, 11, Garden Reach Road, Kolkata-700043 for and on behalf of the President of India, which have been uploaded on website **www.ireps.gov.in** as follows. All the tenders will be closed at 14.00 hrs.

Sl.No.	Tender No.	Closing Date	Brief Description	Qty.	EMD (in ₹)
1	**HB247544A**	04.03.2026	Supply, installation, testing & commissioning of Advanced 4K 3D ICG Endoscopic Camera System etc.	01 Set	3,92,000/-
2	**GEM/2026/B/7169244**	02.03.2026	Healthcare Kitchen & Dietary Service	02 Years	18,60,861/-
3	**38263364**	27.02.2026	Class 'K' (61/2" x 9") CTRB etc.	600 Nos.	3,07,270/-
4	**33255029**	25.03.2026	Brake Calliper unit etc.	80 Nos.	3,25,630/-
5	**81251869C**	26.02.2026	Liquid Oxygen Gas etc.	416602 cum	2,15,190/-
6	**33261491**	10.03.2026	Wheel set Earthing Equipment complete	5440 Set	13,79,680/-
7	**GEM/2026/B/7169244**	02.03.2026	Outsourced of daily indoor activities Housekeeping Service Mechanized dry and wet cleaning patient care services etc.	02 Years	18,60,861/-
8	**6025RGC01**	26.02.2026	Running contract for manufacture and supply of High Viscous Nylon-66 (HVN-66) insulating liners etc.	400000 Nos.	5,19,200/-
9	**25261245**	24.02.2026	AC Blower Motor MVRF for DBR.	36 Nos.	2,87,680/-
10	**29255068B**	27.02.2026	Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of IP Based Video Surveillance System etc.	1434 Set	50,00,000/-
11	**29255127**	02.03.2026	Gear case assly. for WAG-9 Locos.	72 Set	1,07,900/-
12	**29263314**	03.03.2026	LED based Twin Beam Head Light.	1363 Nos.	2,27,160/-
13	**25255023A**	05.03.2026	Flexi coil bogie frame complete (except bolster) with brake rigings	06 Nos.	3,40,550/-
14	**HB265249**	27.02.2026	Tab. semaglutide 7 mg in strip packing etc.	22900 Tabs	1,23,150/-
15	**25253598**	13.03.2026	Control Lever Complete for SMGR to M/s. REPL's Pt. No.- A4540	23 Nos.	98,790/-
16	**93253009**	04.03.2026	Impregnated Compressed Laminated Sheet for berth of passenger coaches etc.	3700 Nos.	1,10,630/-
17	**93253012**	04.03.2026	Wood based impregnated compressed Laminated Sheet etc.	3740 Nos.	2,46,390/-
18	**47253113A**	23.03.2026	Microprocessor Controller of Roof Mounted AC Package Unit for LHB Coaches	121 Nos.	2,72,190/-
19	**38263940**	07.03.2026	Wear Plate for Yoke Pin support for upgraded HT CBC	17000 Nos.	1,41,220/-

Interested tenderers may visit website **www.ireps.gov.in** for full details/ description/specification of the tenders and submit their bids online. In no case manual tenders for these items will be accepted. **N.B. :** Prospective Bidders may regularly visit **www.ireps.gov.in** to participate in all other tenders & any corrigendum published thereafter. **(PR-1187)**

SATYAJIT RAY FILM & TELEVISION INSTITUTE, KOLKATA
DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY- UNDER DISTINCT CATEGORY
UNDER THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING, GOVT. OF INDIA
ADVT. No. SRFTI/RECTT./2025-26/0011

EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

Satyajit Ray Film & Television Institute, Kolkata invites applications from the citizens of India for appointment to the following posts on Direct Recruitment basis:

S/N	Name of the Post	No. of Post	Reservation	Scale of Pay
01	Associate Professor, Screen Play Writing	01 (one)	UR	Level -11 (Rs.67700-208700/-)
02.	Production Assistant	01 (one)	UR	Level - 6 (Rs.35400-112400/-)
03.	Upper Division Clerk	01 (one)	UR	Level - 4 (Rs.25500-81100/-)

For details, log on to www.srfti.ac.in

CBC 22107/12/0024/2526

SPECIAL BRANCH
POLICE HEADQUARTER, M.P., BHOPAL

NO. SB/Store/2026-25 (82), Bhopal, Dated 05-02-2026

"ONLINE E-TENDER NOTICE"

E-tender are invited by Assistant Inspector General of Police, Special Branch (G) M.P., Bhopal on behalf of DGP MP Bhopal for the following item on website **https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app:-**

S.No.	Name of Item(s)	Qty.	Tender Fees (Rs.)	EMD (Rs.)	Tender No.
			Paid Online Through mptenders.gov.in		
1	Light Weight B.R. Jacket	1370	10,000/-	6,16,500/-	1st Tender

1. Cost of tender document (Tender Fee) is non refundable and cannot be exempted in any condition & **must submit online through website https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app.**
2. Tender document can be download from the website of MP Police **(www.mppolice.gov.in)**
3. Bids shall be submitted online only at MP Tenders website: **https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app**
4. **Tender Schedule**

No.	Tender Activity	Date & Time
i	E-Tender Publish Date	07/02/2026 at 17:00 hrs.
ii	Tender document download Start Date	07/02/2026 up to 17:30 hrs.
iii	Submission of written queries - through e-mail: **aigg-sb@mppolice.gov.in**	**10/02/2026 up to 17:00 hrs.**
iv	Pre Bid Meeting along with written queries	11/02/2026 at 12:00 hrs.
v	Bid Submission Start Date	13/02/2026 at 10:00 hrs.
vi	Last date of online e-Tender submission	20/02/2026 up to 16:00 hrs.
vii	Bid will be opened on	23/02/2026 up to 16:00 hrs.
viii	Demonstration from	Demo date will be announced Separately

5. Intending Bidders are advised to visit this website regularly till closing date of submission to keep themselves updated as any change/ modification in the tender will be intimated through this website only by corrigendum /addendum/amendment.
6. Bids will be opened as per date/time as mentioned in the Tender Critical Date Sheet. After online opening of Technical-Bid the results of their qualification as well Price-Bid opening will be intimated later.

Sd/-
D.I.G. of Police
Intelligence (G) M.P. Bhopal
Tel. No. 0755- 2443654

G-25774/25

Directorate of Tourism, Department of Tourism, Art Culture, Sports and Youth Affairs, Govt. of Jharkhand
MDI Building, 2nd Floor, Dhurwa, Ranchi-834004
GSTIN-20RCHD00786C1D4
Phone:(0651)2400493, email:dirjharkhandtourism@gmail.com, Web:https://tourism.jharkhand.gov.in

Very Short e-Tender Notice – Call-3
e-TenderNo.: Tour/Dir/Pub./18/2025- **123** /Ranchi **Date:-12/02/2026**

Online (e-Tender) for Selection of Online Travel Management Platform (OTMP) for Digital Promotion of Jharkhand Tourismin Pan India & Abroad. Jharkhand Tourism invites reputed agencies with relevant experience in digital marketing, tourism promotion, and online branding to participate in this tender.

NIT No.	Name of the works	Estimated cost (in Rs.) Including GST and other taxes as applicable	Earnest money to be deposited (inRs.)	Time of completion of work
Tour/Dir/Pub./ 18/2025-**123 Dt-12.02.2026**	**Request for Proposal (RFP)for Selection of Online Travel Management Platform OTMP for Digital Promotion of Jharkhand Tourism.**	**2,00,00,000.00**	**4,00,000.00**	**1 year**

RFP/Tender Availability	16/02/2026 Time: 16:00 Hrs
Last date for receiving Pre-bid queries	20/02/2026 Time: 16:00 Hrs
Pre-bid Meeting Google Meet Joining info Video call link: https://meet.google.com/iro-pnzh-cyx OTMP must submit Pre-bid query before pre-bid meeting date, also no query will be entertained after pre - bid meeting.	23/02/2026 Time: 15:00 Hrs
Response to queries	24/02/2026 Time: 15:00 Hrs
Last date of Submission	25/02/2026 Time: 16:00 Hrs
Technical proposal opening	26/02/2026 at 16:00 Hrs
Technical Presentation	To be announced
Financial Bid Opening	To be announced
Cost of Tender	Electronic transfer of INR 10,000/- (Non-Refundable) through Jharkhand Tender website – https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in/nicgep/app
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Electronic transfer of INR 4,00,000/- through Jharkhand Tender website – https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in
Website for downloading Tender Documents	https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in
Name and Address of Office inviting Tender	Directorate of Tourism, Department of Tourism, Art Culture, Sports and Youth Affairs, Govt. of Jharkhand MDI Building, 2nd Floor, Dhurwa, Ranchi-834004
Venue for Bid Opening & Presentation by bidders	Director, Directorate of Tourism, MDI Building, 2nd Floor, Dhurwa, Ranchi-834004

1. E-Tender document and BOQ including terms & conditions, Tender specification, etc. can be down loaded from website https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in. Any details required in the regard can also be procured from the office of the undersigned (0651-2400493) during office hours. NIC helpline no. is 0651-2400178.
2. The bids will be received only through electronic tendering mode will be considered.
3. No claim shall be entertained on account of disruption of internet services while uploading the bid. Bidders are advised to upload their bids well in advance to avoid last minute technical snag.

Bidders must submit a copy of the UTR/reference number as proof of online payment of the tender fee and EMD, as mentioned in the NIT, before the specified cutoff date and time. The details of the finally uploaded BOQ, EMD, and payment instruments (DD/Cheque, etc.) must exactly match the details submitted online (scanned copies); any discrepancies will result in the bid being rejected. Additionally, all bidders are required to submit a **hard copy** of the technical tender document to the Directorate of Tourism, prior to the tender opening date as specified in the RFP.

Sd/-
Director, Tourism

PR.NO.372923 Tourism, Art Culture Sports And Youth Affairs (25-26):D

SC seeks status report on Manipur violence

Manipur, from Page 1

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta for the Centre said that the panel has reported to the court that these organisations were creating a hindrance and they were instigating people to continue violence. Gonsalves, however, said this is not true. The bench, however, stated that the committee serves as a neutral umpire and comprises former judges. Gonsalves claimed that the rehabilitation and the prosecution were low. He sought a copy of the reports to provide their inputs.

The bench raised an apprehension regarding the sensitive content in the reports. In response, Gonsalves said the court may decide out of the 27 reports, which can be shared.

"Don't want to see any examples. Please do not argue in open court. These things are reported," the bench said, adding, whatever the committee has recommended, the Centre and state should make an endeavour to immediately comply with those recommendations. The bench also broached the idea that instead of the apex court, the jurisdictional Manipur High Court, which has a new chief justice, or the Gauhati High Court, or both, monitor the trials and related developments in the violence cases. The court-appointed committee comprising Justice Mittal, the former chief justice of the Jammu and Kashmir, and Justices Shalini P Joshi, a former judge of the Bombay High Court, and Asha Menon, an ex-judge of the Delhi High Court, have so far submitted several reports on measures to rehabilitate the victims. Over 200 people have been killed, several hundred injured and thousands displaced since ethnic violence broke out in Manipur on May 3, 2023.

Senior advocate Vrinda Grover, appearing for one of the women who died recently, submitted that she should be substituted by her mother. She alleged the CBI did not even inform her that a chargesheet in her rape case was filed. She said the Kuki woman died last month from an illness allegedly linked to the trauma she suffered after being gang-raped. "I have accessed the trial court report. The main accused are not appearing. The CBI is not present. The casualness with which it is happening is shocking," she said. Mehta replied that nobody can oppose what Grover is saying and the victim's rights cannot be affected.

The bench said let the CBI file a status report, and said, "We can ask the Chief Justices of Manipur and Gauhati High Courts to coordinate and see how victims' statements need to be handled and how they can be recorded."

'Implementing 2 safety phases must for IPL at Chinnaswamy'

Chinnaswamy, from Page 1

Parameshwara stated that while the government has given "in-principle approval" for hosting IPL matches at the stadium, safety remains paramount.

"In the last 50 years, no such incident had occurred, especially during matches. This [stampede] occurred during the celebrations. We will also deliberate whether to allow celebrations going forward," he added.

He assured of deploying adequate police personnel at the stadium.

Following deliberations, the KSCA assured the Maheshwar Rao committee that "all recommendations will be implemented in a phase-wise manner".

"The timelines given by them will be adhered to scrupulously. All critical crowd safety interventions pertaining to Phase 1, which are essential for IPL-2026, will be completed before the commencement, i.e. 26.03.2026," as per the committee report.

The committee had made 15 general observations and recommendations.

"The entire layout of the stadium area should be re-evaluated from the ground up, rather than making incremental adjustments. This approach will ensure the creation of a comprehensive master plan and the best use of space by relocating most ground structures, such as generator rooms, horticulture rooms, scrap storage areas, watch towers, and others, to maximise open ground space around the stadium. Adequate circumferential space shall be ensured for public movement," it stated.

Main entry gate of M Chinnaswamy Stadium, where the tragic stampede incident took place, claiming the lives of 11 people and injuring over 70 during RCB's victory celebration, in Bengaluru on Tuesday, June 10, 2025. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

"Temporary structures around the stadium must not be erected without prior permission from the concerned authority and clearance from the police and fire departments. Safety advisories should go beyond public safety and form part of a comprehensive master plan that aligns with the guidelines of all relevant departments, including fire and emergency services, police, and PWD departments."

The committee further recommended that all gates and entries into the campus "will be renamed, renumbered, and standardised to prevent confusion for the public, and separate emergency exit routes, constructed with fire-resistant materials, will be designated".

It also recommended a comprehensive e-ticketing and e-pass system for all passes, including VVIP and corporate passes, to eliminate the need for physical passes. Standalone scanning machines are to be used to ensure operation without network dependency, especially during match days when network congestion may occur. This shall avoid internet-based delays, it said.

Further, the width of all entry and exit points shall be at least six metres. All grass-holding areas shall be covered with non-slip mats on match days and all existing watch towers shall be redesigned as single-pole structures with minimal ground footprint, incorporating adequate standing space for personnel on the tower platform. Medical triage facilities and additional ambulances will be set up in at least eight holding areas, as per the recommendations.

"Adequate large cloakrooms and baggage lockers must be provided at these zones. The KSCA should install enough baggage scanners and door frame metal detectors to ensure thorough screening. This equipment may be kept permanently in the KSCA's stock for immediate availability. The KSCA shall also ensure protection and preservation of all trees during the proposed civil works. An MoU may be explored with the BMRCL to use the BRV Grounds for parking during match days. Adequately verified volunteers and security personnel shall be deployed at all gates, baggage scanners, and within stands to ensure safety and protection. These volunteers should be sourced from designated agencies and be properly trained for emergencies."

In pre-SIR drive, 3.74 cr voters...

SIR, from Page 1

Voters aged below 40, but not in the 2002 rolls, will also be covered through 'progeny mapping'. This means that such voters aged above 18 will be mapped with their parents or grandparents who existed in the 2002 rolls.

"We will verify each and every voter. Every voter will get two sets of enrolment forms. One will be kept by the booth-level officer (BLO), and another will be for the voter," an official with direct knowledge of the mapping exercise said. "The mapping exercise will help us understand how many voters, who were in the 2002 rolls, continue in 2025."

BLOs have also been allowed to take up interstate mapping. This will cover voters who were not present in the 2002 list, but got included in any post-SIR electoral roll in other states.

The progress of mapping is low in Bengaluru - in the range of 23 to 26%. According to an official, this is due to the State Election Commission (SEC) preparing its own electoral rolls for elections to municipalities under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA).

The official added that mapping will continue during SIR as well.

VOTER MAPPING

Total electors in 2025: 5,57,73,502

- Electors having cut-off age: **3,12,28,103**
- Mapped: **2,01,19,138**
- Electors without cut-off age: **2,45,45,399**
- Mapped: **1,73,61,848**

Highest mapping: **Tumakuru** 89.29%

Lowest mapping: **BBMP Central** 23.66%

Chandan's mortal remains to reach Bengaluru on Feb 16

▸ **BENGALURU, PTI:** The mortal remains of a 37-year-old Indian IT professional, who was shot dead in Canada recently, will be brought back to Bengaluru on Monday, BJP MP K Sudhakar said on Friday.

"It is a relief that the efforts to bring back the mortal remains of Chandan Kumar, a resident of Thyamagondlu in Nelamangala taluk (on Bengaluru outskirts), who was killed in a shootout in Toronto, Canada, on February 7, have been fruitful," Sudhakar posted on 'X'.

BNP returns to power in B'desh...

Bangladesh, from Page 1

Jamaat-e-Islami, meanwhile, in its best performance ever, secured some 70 seats along with its 11-party alliance. Its previous best was 18 seats in the 1991 elections. But several conservative bigwigs in the coalition were rejected. These include Jamaat Secretary General Mia Golam Parwar, Assistant Secretary General Hamidur Rahman and Azad Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish's Ameer Mamunul Haque.

The NCP (National Citizens' Party) led by youth leader Nahid Islam, who was a big face of the July uprising in 2024 against the Shiekh Hasina regime, has also now entered Parliament, winning six of the 30 seats it fought.

But the party's prominent candidates, including Nasiruddin Patwary and Sarjis Alam, known for his inflammatory anti-India statements, lost the race. The Jamaat's lone Hindu candidate too, could not win.

While the break-up of final official voter data is awaited, Bangladesh's feisty independent and vocal women seem to have rejected the Jamaat's manifesto proposals of segregated public spaces and fewer working hours.

Meanwhile, Jamaat has raised allegations of "abnormal delays" and "result tampering," warning that it would launch a tough movement if the public mandate were "snatched away".

Speaking to reporters at the Election Commission building early morning, Jamaat's assistant secretary general Ahsanul Mahboob Zubair alleged that returning officers were intentionally delaying results to favour a "particular party."

"In the seats contested by our top leaders, results should have been declared by 8 pm or 9 pm according to the signed sheets given to polling agents," Zubair said.

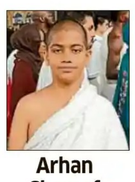
(With PTI inputs)

7 killed in horrific chain accident...

Accident, from Page 1

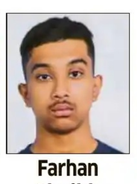
A third vehicle — a Maruti Brezza — also sustained damage after it was hit by debris from the truck's broken axle. Fortunately, all four occupants escaped with minor injuries.

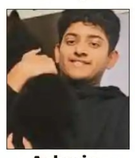
The deceased students, aged between 16 and 18, were residents of various localities in Bengaluru, including Kothanur, Kammanahalli and Horamavu. Most were students at RV PUC College and CMR National Public School.


Arhan Shareef

Bharat

Ethan George


Farhan Sheikh


Ashwin Nair

Gagan

Police have identified them as: Ayaan Ali (17), a PU student from CMR College and the driver of the SUV; Arhaan Sharif (16), a Class 10 student; Ashwin Nair (17), a Kerala native and PU student; Bharat (18), a PU student from Fraser Town; Ethan George (17), a Hulimavu resident and PU student at RV PU College, and Farhan Sheikh (18), a Class 10 student at CMR National Public School.

The container truck driver, Balasubramani (33), a resident of Malur, sustained injuries and is receiving treatment.

He told reporters from his hospital bed that he was driving steadily in his lane when the impact flipped his vehicle. "I was unconscious for a while until locals pulled me out. Only then did I realise a car had hit me from behind," he said.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Labhu Ram, who visited the spot, said excessive speed and reckless driving appear to be the primary causes. "The impact was so violent that our officers had a harrowing time extricating the bodies from the remains of the car," he added.

The bodies were shifted to the Government Hoskote Hospital for post-mortem examinations. Relatives of the deceased have been notified. The Sulibele police have registered a case and are investigating whether the driver was distracted or if there were other mechanical failures.

Preliminary findings suggest that the teenagers had left their homes around 3 am for a joyride on the new highway. Police are investigating if the minor driver possessed a valid licence and whether the group was distracted or under the influence.

Special Breaking News

SALE

First Time in Hotel Radisson BLU 14 & 15 February

India's Biggest Summer & Winter Garments Exhibition

Something going to happen like never before at Radisson Blu Hotel Bangaluru
Direct sale to all retail customers at a discount of up to 90%.

All these garments will be sold 100% at the rates given below.

Men's Wear: Sweaters, Winter T-Shirts, Jackets, Hoodies, Jeans, Shirts, T-Shirts, Trousers, Lowers, Shorts, Kurta, Pyjama, Sherwani, Coat, Blazers priced from ₹2,000 to ₹20,000 available in the range of ₹250 to ₹750 and ₹2000

Ladies and Girls Wear: Sweaters, Winter T-Shirts, Winter Jackets, Jackets, Hoodies, Coat Sets, Tops, Kurtis, Palazzos, Jeans, Shirts, T-Shirts, Trousers, Lowers, Shorts, and Leggings, One Piece, Party Wear Suits priced from ₹1,000 to ₹7,000 available in ₹100 to ₹2299 and ₹400 to ₹850

Kids Wear: Jeans, Shirts, T-Shirts, Trousers, Lowers, Frocks, Shorts, and more... priced from ₹1,000 to ₹5,000 available at ₹299 to ₹499

Branded Footwear: Gents, Ladies, Kids - Sports shoes, Leather shoes, Trekking shoes, Sandals, Slippers, Bellies priced from ₹1,000 to ₹5,000 available in this mega sale for ₹350 to ₹1500. Branded shoes priced from ₹8,000 to ₹40,000 available at affordable prices.

Home Decor & Special Counters: Goggles, imported branded watches, perfumes, ladies bags, bed sheets, towels, men's jewellery, ladies jewellery and much more... starting at ₹199 in this mega sale with prices ranging from ₹1,000 to ₹7,500

Get your pick of premium winter garments, which are sold for Rs 2000 to Rs 12000, at just Rs 200 to Rs 1200.

Why is it selling so cheap?

Flipkart Myntra amazon

Due to overstock in online companies, now all the stock will be sold and finished in offline Radisson Blu Hotel Bangaluru Hitec City in 2 days.

Beware of other fake sales in Bangaluru, Our company's original sale is held at Radisson Blu Hotel Bangaluru Hitec City

This Sale is only for 2 Days, Saturday & Sunday, 14 & 15 February 2026

VENUE : Radisson BLU 90/4 Outer Ring road Maratha halli Village, Maratha halli, Bangaluru 37

NO ENTRY FEES, NO PARKING CHARGE | TIMING : MORNING 10 AM TO EVENING 10 PM

Note: 1. Due to pressure from companies, we cannot publish the brand names of all products in the newspaper. 2. Bangaluru people are requested not to miss this sale under any circumstances. 3. We claim that after this sale, such big brands will never be available to buy at such cheap prices. 4. The counter whose stock will be exhausted will be closed immediately. 5. Please maintain silence in the hall.

Ramalinga Reddy

You should ask DKS on CM change issue, says Ramalinga Reddy

BIDAR, DHNS: Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy told the media on Friday that they should ask Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on the change of leadership issue.

Replying to a query on the ongoing power tussle between Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy Shivakuma, Reddy said, "I will not comment on the leadership change issue. Giving statements openly will do more harm than good to the party."

On the government allowing the Chinnaswamy Stadium to host RCB matches, Reddy said, "The Cabinet decided to give permission for the KSCA to host IPL matches at Chinnaswamy Stadium with riders. The decision was made in view of the demand by the cricket fans," he said.

KSRTC package bus tours to Gaganachukki, Melkote

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has launched package bus tours on weekends for passengers travelling from Bengaluru to Gaganachukki, Chikka Tirupati and Melkote.

Bengaluru-Gaganachukki via Somanathapura, Talakad, Madhyaranga and Barachukki (340 km) on Rajahamsa buses. The fare is Rs 750 per adult and Rs 600 per child.

Bengaluru-Gaganachukki via Somanathapura, Talakad, Madhyaranga-Barachukki and Gaganachukki on Ashwamedha Classic buses. The fare is Rs 600 per adult and Rs 150 per child.

Bengaluru-Chikka Tirupati via Kotilingeshwara, Bangaru Tirupati, Avani, Mulbagal, Kurudumale and Kolar on Ashwamedha Classic buses. The fare is Rs 600 per adult and Rs 150 per child.

Bengaluru-Melkote via Srirangapatna and Kallahalli on Ashwamedha Classic buses. The fare is Rs 670 per adult and Rs 500 per child.

The fare for all package tours excludes entrance fees, breakfast, lunch and dinner.

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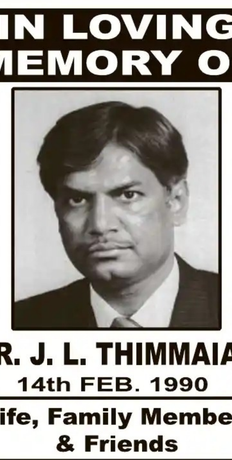


IN LOVING MEMORY OF
DR. J. L. THIMMAIAH
14th FEB. 1990
Wife, Family Members & Friends

In ever loving memory of
Smt. M. SHASHIKALA
Ex.Off Supdt. Indian Air Force
W/o V. S. Hari Babu
Expired 14-02-2003
Amma, we miss you
From: FAMILY

Enough is enough, says HM on leadership debates in public

'I will speak to high command on issue, if situation arises'

BENGALURU, DHNS

Taking strong exception to some Congress leaders openly issuing statements about the leadership issue, Home Minister G Parameshwara on Friday said "enough is enough, this must stop."

Speaking to reporters, he said: "The AICC President (Mallikarjun Kharge) has asked everyone to shut up. He cannot be more harsh than that. Even after that, it's not correct for MLAs and leaders speaking about this. Enough is enough, this must stop."

He was reacting to Women and Child Development Minister Laxmi Hebbalkar's MLC-brother Channaraj Hattiholi's statement that Shivakumar should become the chief minister.

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar's visit to Delhi recently (he returned on Thursday), and the foreign "study tour" of Congress MLAs led by Animal Husbandry Minister and Piriyapatna MLA K Venkatesh have reignited debates on the power struggle between Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar.

Noting that people's expectations from the government were different, the home minister said the focus has to be on development.

"I hope the high command is observing this. When the situation comes, I will also speak to the party leadership about this," Parameshwara said, adding that such a situation wasn't new for the high command.

G PARAMESHWARA
Home Minister

"The AICC President (Mallikarjun Kharge) has asked everyone to shut up. He cannot be more harsh than that. Even after that, it's not correct for MLAs and leaders speaking about this. Enough is enough, this must stop.

'High command supreme'

Speaking about the issue elsewhere, Medium and Heavy Industries Minister M B Patil said: "High command is supreme. Whatever the high command decides will happen. Even the chief minister has said that he will follow what the high command says."

No information on foreign tour: Shivakumar

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar said on Friday that he had neither taken a report nor tried to find out about Congress MLAs going on a foreign trip.

"Those going (on the foreign trip) haven't told. Nor have those sending them told anything. Since you (media) said, I will look into it."

When a reporter asked Shivakumar whether he and Siddaramaiah had been asked to go to Delhi on February 17, Shivakumar said: "I don't know, I don't know. Let's see, time will answer all these things."

"I always live on hope and confidence. Efforts will always be rewarded. There's God wherever there's devotion," Shivakumar added.

Confident of Centre's nod for Mekedatu & Upper Krishna: DKS

BENGALURU, DHNS

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah inaugurated the International Conference on Dam Safety at the Indian Institute of Science on Friday.

The two-day conference highlights a set of varied themes such as international and national regulatory frameworks for dam safety, innovations in structural health assessment of dams and rehabilitation materials, Ageing Dams: State of Art Rehabilitation Practices, and risk-informed decision-making for safe dams, among others.

Speaking at the event, the chief minister highlighted five points of importance with regard to dam safety. He noted that nearly 70% of these dams are over 25 years old, underscoring the urgent need for systematic safety evaluation, modernisation and risk-informed operation.

"First, governments at the union and state levels must move beyond just compliance to comprehensive culture-building, ensuring that periodic inspections, safety audits, and emergency action plans are not treated as formalities but as living instruments of risk governance. Second, regulatory bodies and technical agencies must institutionalise risk-informed decision-making. Data from instrumentation, remote sensing and structural health monitoring systems must be integrated into real-time dashboards," he said, also speaking on the roles of financial institutions, academic and research institutions, and local administrations.

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, who also holds the irrigation portfolio, spoke about a few key initiatives of keen interest to the state government.

"We will execute the Mekedatu and Upper Krishna projects if the Centre gives approvals. We are confident that the Centre would give the necessary approvals," he said.

Karnataka is currently implementing the Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Programme (DRIP) Phases 2 and 3, covering 58 dams with an approved outlay of Rs 1,500 crore, focusing on structural safety, surveillance, and long-term resilience.

Regarding the tourism activities at dams, he said, "The dams currently have a 500-metre restriction on commercial activities, but it needs to be relaxed to promote tourism. It would help the local economy... On behalf of the government of Karnataka, I respectfully request reconsideration of the blanket 500-metre restriction under NDSA guidelines, allowing flexibility while ensuring uncompromised safety standards."

Johannes Zutt, World Bank's vice-president for the South Asia region, also addressed the crowd at the inaugural session. The first day of the event also saw three discussions, with six discussions set to take place on Saturday on topics such as 'Sediment Management in Reservoirs' and 'Dam Failure Case Studies: Lessons Learnt'.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy D K Shivakumar at the International Conference on Dam Safety at IISc in Bengaluru on Friday. Senior Congress MLA T B Jayachandra, Union Minister of State for Jal Shakti Raj Bhushan Chaudhary and World Bank Vice-President (South Asia) Johannes Zutt are also seen. DH PHOTO/B K JANARDHAN

ETCHED IN FLOWER

A floral replica of Saalumarada Thimmakka displayed at the flower show organised as part of Hampi Utsav, in Hampi, Vijayanagar district, on Friday. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah inaugurated the festival. DH PHOTO

Health dept to enforce rules for helping accident victims

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Health department is all set to operationalise the Karnataka Good Samaritan and Medical Professional (Protection and Regulation During Emergency Situations) Rules, 2026, to protect victims of road accidents and people helping the victims.

While the law was initially passed in 2018, the new section offers clarity on the complaint authority, police disciplinary mechanism, creation and detailing of the 'Good Samaritan Fund' and reimbursement for the hospitals treating victims.

According to a government order, if a police officer or doctor fails to help accident victims, a complaint can be filed with the deputy commissioner and police officers can face action under the police disciplinary action.

The 'Good Samaritan Fund' will be drawn from CSR funds, donations, government road safety funds, other government schemes and loans if necessary, the order said.

If patients are unable to pay for treatment, the hospital should continue to administer treatment. The hospital can later claim the money from Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust under the Arogya Bharat Arogya Karnataka.

The hospital will be paid according to government rates. A medical expert committee will also take a decision on the rates, if the hospital is not listed in government rates, read the order. The hospital can also meet the Commissioner of Health and Family Welfare if it is not happy with the pricing.

'Sahasa Simha' director Joe Simon dies at 80

BENGALURU, DHNS

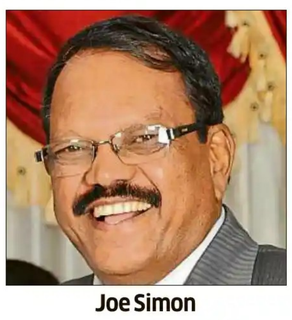
Kannada actor and director Joe Simon, who helmed several memorable Kannada films including 'Sahasa Simha', died of a heart attack on Friday. He was 80.

Simon was attending a meeting at the Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce (KFCC) when he collapsed. He was rushed to Mallige Hospital where he was declared dead.

His first film as a director, 'Ondu Premada Kathe' that released in 1977, was also Kannada's first black-and-white cinemascope movie. The film starred L V Sharada, Ashok and Rajinikanth.

'Simhada Jodi' starring Vishnuvardhan and Manjula followed in 1980.

Simon forged a highly rewarding partnership with Vishnuvardhan, with whom he made 12 films. 'Simhada Jodi' was followed by 'Nanna Rosha Nooru Varusha', 'Maha Prachandaru' and 'Sahasa Simha', the last of which proved a turning point for both Simon and Vishnuvardhan, who went on to be called 'Sahasa Simha' forever after the movie.



Joe Simon

However, the failure of 'Sididedda Sahodara' led to a misunderstanding between the duo. They did however reunite for 'Mahapurusha'.

Simon was also experimental. In 1984, he made 'Odeda Haalu', action scenes of which were inspired by the famous 1973 British spy thriller, 'Eye of the Needle'.

He acted in the film alongside Charanraj and Bhavya. His 'Snehada Kadalalli' was a remake of Ramesh Sippy's 'Sagar'.

Simon also made the spy thriller 'Hong Kongnalli Agent Amar' starring Ambareesh. He also collaborated with Dwarakish (as producer) and Shankar Nag (as hero) for 'Nyaya Gedditu' (1983), which was a success. He also acted in most of the films he directed.

Simon was born in Mandya in 1946. He worked in over 100 Kannada films as actor, director, associate director, lyricist, writer and screenwriter.

He was in the limelight until he made movies with Vishnuvardhan. Simon is survived by his wife and four children.

(With inputs from film historian K Puttaswamy)

Employment visa: Notice to employer satisfies procedural requirement of fairness, rules HC

AMBARISH B
BENGALURU, DHNS

In cases of employment visa sponsorship where the alleged misrepresentation pertains to the employer's statutory declarations, a show-cause notice to the employer satisfies the procedural requirement of fairness, according to the High Court of Karnataka.

"The beneficiary employee cannot claim an additional independent hearing where the determinative facts lie beyond his personal domain and stand admitted by the sponsor," Justice Suraj Govindaraj said, dismissing a petition filed by Christopher Charles Kamolins, an Australian employed by an MNC.

The petitioner was granted an employment visa (E-2) in January 2018 by the High Commission of India at Canberra in Australia. The proposed employment was as General Manager of Fisher and Paykel Health Care India Private Limited, a New Zealand-based MNC. The company had claimed to have conducted enquiries to identify a suitable Indian for the position but found none.

Subsequently, the Foreign Regional Registration Officer (FRRO) raised certain queries with respect to the employment and on May 1, 2019, a Leave India Notice (LIN) was issued against the petitioner.

The petitioner contended that once the High Commission granted the employment visa, the FRRO cannot issue an LIN. He also submitted that while LIN was issued on May 1, 2019 (served on June 19), a show-cause notice was issued to the company only on June 4, 2019. He further argued that he was neither put on notice nor granted an opportunity to explain his position, a violation of principles of natural justice.

On the other hand, the FRRO contended that the visa was secured through suppression and misrepresentation.

It was submitted that the petitioner's qualifications, a bachelor's degree in nursing and a graduate certificate in Critical Care Nursing do not justify displacement of Indian managerial talent and that there are innumerable persons with the same qualifications in India. The FRRO said with the petitioner's exit in November 2019 and the subsequent expiry of the Employment Visa (in 2020), the LIN stood exhausted.

After perusing the material, the court noted that the company, upon enquiry, had admitted that "no advertisements were placed" and they "selected employees from their existing Australian office."

"A declaration that no local talent is available is a jurisdictional fact for the grant of the visa. If this declaration is false, the visa is void ab initio," Justice Govindaraj said, adding that when a privilege is obtained by fraud, the beneficiary cannot claim a violation of natural justice when that privilege is withdrawn.

Delving further into "principles of natural justice", the court said the hearing afforded to the employer was sufficient compliance with fairness, given the nature of the fraud.

"The employment visa regime operates on the principle that sponsorship validity is a continuing condition. If sponsorship is withdrawn, invalidated or shown to be fundamentally defective, the beneficiary's status correspondingly lapses. This is inherent in the nature of sponsored visas across immigration systems," Justice Govindaraj said.

CMO writes to police for probe into misuse of CM's name for transfer

Flags 'deputation' of health official to Excise dept

BENGALURU, DHNS

The chief minister's office has asked the Vidhana Soudha police to investigate the alleged misuse of Siddaramaiah's name for an unauthorised interdepartmental transfer of a government officer.

The direction was issued by Arun Furtado, Joint Secretary to the Chief Minister (Admin), to police inspector, Vidhana Soudha, on Friday.

"It has been observed that a note regarding the deputation of Dr K Mohan, currently serving as District Health and Family Welfare Officer, Mandya, to the post of Deputy Commissioner of Excise, Mysuru Rural, is circulating on social media and in the media," Furtado wrote.

"This note, which bears no official number or date, has not been registered in the E-Office software of the chief minister's secretariat nor has the note been forwarded to any department. Based on this, no transfer/deputation order has been issued either. However, as it appears that this act has been committed with the malicious intent of bringing a bad name to the chief minister and the government, I am directed to request you to conduct an appropriate investigation into this matter, identify the culprits, and take urgent legal action against them," he added.

The letter initiating the transfer had gone viral on social media. While containing no date, the letter had a signature resembling that of the chief minister. *DH* has seen a copy of the letter.

Reacting to the incident, Leader of the Opposition R Ashoka said: "This clearly holds a mirror to the ongoing transfer racket in the Congress government and the commission business happening in the Excise Department."

He also claimed that the officer being recommended - Dr Mohan - was "reportedly a relative" of Agriculture Minister N Cheluvarayaswamy.

Govt doctors warn of strike, set 21-day deadline

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Karnataka Medical Officers' Association has vowed to go on strike if the Health and Family Welfare Department fails to fulfill its demands within 21 days.

In a letter, the association urged the department to set right certain administrative procedures, including those related to appointment, which the officers have been requesting for over four years and the list of seniority of officers.

According to the rules laid down by the government, the seniority list of officers and doctors working in the department must be prepared every December.

However, the association claims that such a list has not been prepared for over 13 years despite multiple requests to the officials concerned.

The failure to prepare the list has denied promotions to senior officers while some have retired without promotions.

The association also expressed disappointment with new orders, including those related to the cancellation of funding higher education to doctors enrolled in the department, removal of doctors related to obstetrics and gynaecology from Community Health Centres, and objection to doctors performing private in-patient duties.

According to the association, while doctors enrolled in ESI and the Medical Education Department are being given an opportunity to take up higher studies with complete funding, the same facility has been cancelled from this year for health department doctors, leading to disappointment.

To reduce the Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR), the government decided to replace doctors from smaller hospitals where there were fewer deliveries. The association said that this would put pregnant women from rural areas in distress, which would in fact increase the MMR.

The association also complained about an absence of uninterrupted medicine supplies from the government and noted that despite requests, the issue has not been addressed, leading to the suffering of patients.

Arrested for murder, BJP MLA referred to Jayadeva for heart checkup

BENGALURU, DHNS

A Bengaluru court on Friday directed the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to provide medical treatment to BJP MLA Byrathi Basavaraj, who is in custody in connection with the murder of history-sheeter Biklu Shiva.

The court ordered that Basavaraj be shifted to the government-run Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research for a detailed cardiac evaluation after he complained of heart-related issues. Earlier in the day, he was examined at the Bowring and Lady Curzon Hospital, where doctors indicated possible cardiac concerns and recommended further tests at a specialised heart hospital.

Following the medical opinion, the court directed the investigating officials to ensure that Basavaraj undergoes a comprehensive examination under the supervision of senior doctors at Jayadeva Hospital. As he remains in CID custody, the medical tests will be conducted under official supervision.

The court also instructed the CID to produce him before the judge on Saturday along with the medical reports. Based on the reports, the court will decide whether to remand him in judicial custody or grant further CID custody for interrogation.

Dr B Dinesh, Director of Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research, said Basavaraj had been admitted after doctors detected a variation in his ECG during an examination.

The MLA's blood samples have been collected for further medical investigations.

"He will remain under observation till Saturday, pending detailed test reports and clinical evaluation," Dr Dinesh said.

Basavaraj was arrested upon his arrival at the Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru on Thursday evening, hours after the Supreme Court denied him anticipatory bail.

Meanwhile, Home Minister G Parameshwara remarked that the MLA had no option but to surrender and vowed that CID officials would take appropriate action.

Collegiate Edu Dept struggles to find guest faculty for 10 subjects

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Department of Collegiate Education is stuck in a bind following the High Court's order mandating that only those who meet the qualifications prescribed by the University Grants Commission (UGC) be hired as guest lecturers at state-run degree colleges and varsities. The shortage of qualified candidates has left the department struggling to fill nearly 1,500 vacant posts for at least ten subjects.

In the wake of the High Court's order, more than 5,000 guest lecturers who lacked either of the two qualifications mandated by the UGC – they must have cleared NET/KSET or have a PhD – losing their job. "There is a dearth of qualified candidates for at least ten subjects, including Computer Science. More than 1,500 posts are lying unfilled," said a senior official from the department.

Notwithstanding the UGC's orders, the state government persisted with guest lecturers who did not meet the regulatory body's criteria. However, candidates who possessed the qualifications mandated by the UGC, moved the court, leading to the current impasse.

Thankfully the court has approved the appointment of lecturers who do not meet the UGC's criteria for those subjects for which the Collegiate Education Department is unable to find an adequate number of qualified candidates. "We are submitting a list of more than 1,500 candidates we have to hire for teaching at least ten subjects to the court. We will follow the court's orders on the issue," the senior official from the Collegiate Education Department added.

Meanwhile, colleges have been struggling to tide over the shortage of lecturers for many subjects for the past few months.

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Bannerghatta Road, Bangalore – 560 069. Ph.: 080 22977278 Fax No.: 080 22977278
E-mail: director@jayadevacardiology.com Website: www.jayadevacardiology.com

Ref. No. SJICR/EST(1)/126/2025-26 Date: 13.02.2026

NOTIFICATION FOR WALK-IN-INTERVIEW

In continuation to the notification No. SJICR/EST(1)/126/2025-26, Dated: 10-12-2025 and corrigendum Dated: 26-12-2025 for the Walk-in-Interview published in the Newspaper on 11-12-2025 & 27-12-2025 respectively, the walk in interview is scheduled at **09:00 AM** on **19-02-2026** in the chambers of the Honb'le Medical Education Minister, 2nd Floor, Vikasa Soudha, Bengaluru. The eligible candidates are informed to attend the interview with all their original documents, as per the earlier notification, in the above said venue.

Sd/-,
DIRECTOR

DIPR/CP/LC/5658/2025-26

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Shri Siddaramaiah
Chief Minister, Karnataka

Shri D. K. Shivakumar
Deputy Chief Minister, Karnataka

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Rahul Dravid
Legendary Cricketer

Priyank Kharge
Minister for IT & BT & Rural Development & Panchayat Raj Govt of Karnataka

Dinesh G. Rao
Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Govt of Karnataka

Dr. C N Ashwath Narayan
Former Deputy CM & BJP MLA

Amanda Puravankara
Executive Director, Provident Housing Ltd, Puravankara

Gurucharan Gollerkeri
Director, School of Social Sciences & Law, MSRUAS

U Dinesh Kumar
Professor & Director In-Charge at IIM Bangalore

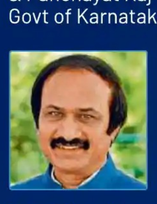
Dr. S. Vidyashankar
Vice Chancellor of Visvesvaraya Technological University

Dr. J B Simha
Professor & Chief Mentor (AI), REVA University | Chief AI Officer, AdoptAI

Gautham Machaiah
Senior media professional

Uma Mahadevan
Addl. Chief Secy & Development Commissioner, Govt of Karnataka

Abhishek Poddar
Founder-Trustee, Museum of Art & Photography


B.L. Shankar
Chairman, Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath

Nalini Malaviya
Bengaluru-based art consultant, curator & writer

Mallanna Sasalu
CEO-South Puravankara Ltd.

Maheshwar Rao
Chief Commissioner, GBA

Dr. Ashwin Mahesh
Urbanist & Climate Scientist | Former ABIDe Task Force Member

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Harsh Gupta
Principal Secy, Health & Family Welfare Serices, Govt. of Karnataka

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Founder, Gubbi Labs

Shalini Rajneesh
Chief Secretary, Govt. of Karnataka

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Unequal deal, uncertain outcomes

Beneath the optimism around the interim trade agreement between India and the United States, there is an asymmetry in provisions that is hard to ignore. While the agreement has brought relief to the markets and has ended a period of protracted negotiations, the government's claims of a win-win deal have also triggered a few uncomfortable questions. Critically, while the joint statement says India has agreed to "eliminate or reduce tariffs on all US industrial goods and a wide range of US food and agricultural products", the US will levy an 18% tariff on imports from India. Furthermore, it could be argued that the agreement has not cleared the uncertainty, considering what it essentially signals is a pause, and not a trade deal in a legal or commercial sense.

Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal has tried to alleviate concerns of farmers by claiming that meat, poultry, dairy, GM food products, rice, wheat, pulses, and sugar have been kept out of the framework. But there are some apprehensions over the possible import of apples, soybean oil, dried distillers' grains, etc. Farmer organisations have protested against the agreement as they fear that it would endanger an already precarious farming economy. There are other concerns. India now enjoys a trade surplus of over $40 billion with the US. This could be strained with the commitment to purchase US goods and products worth $500 billion over the next five years. A 'promise' from the Indian side to stop buying Russian oil is considered to be part of the agreement, though there is no mention of this in the released text. It has been reported that India's oil purchases would be monitored to ensure that the condition is met. The arrangement has not been officially confirmed by the Indian side, but if agreed upon, this undermines India's strategic autonomy.

Asymmetrical concessions and autonomy risks in the India-US trade deal demand greater clarity

It is being claimed that the concessions are confidence-building measures, and the framework would lead to a more comprehensive trade agreement with better terms and conditions if trust and stability are established. But President Trump and his administration are known for arbitrary and self-serving decisions and cannot be expected to offer a better deal later. It may be noted that many concessions promised by the US side are not legally laid down but are in the form of executive decisions, which can be revoked. The lack of transparency in many parts of the agreement is striking. But the government has, so far, not managed to address it in a language of conviction and clarity.

Fake certificates: Probe must go deep

The mass resignation of at least 200 guest faculty members from government degree colleges across Karnataka is not an act of accountability; it is an attempt to slip quietly out of a widening scandal. The resignations follow a crackdown by the Higher Education Department to verify the authenticity of PhD and MPhil certificates submitted. What has emerged is a damning indictment of institutional failure. It is alleged that several candidates submitted counterfeit PhD and MPhil certificates to bypass mandatory qualifications such as the National Eligibility Test or the Karnataka State Eligibility Test. This raises a fundamental question: how were these documents accepted without due verification? It is implausible that such lapses occurred without the complicity of those handling appointments.

These candidates have not only indulged in fraud but have also snatched opportunities from those more deserving. They must not be permitted to go scot-free merely because they have stepped down. A thorough inquiry by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) is essential to establish how fake certificates were procured, the extent of the racket, and the possible role of university and departmental officers. The most uncomfortable question must also be confronted head-on: did money exchange hands? While Commissioner for Collegiate and Technical Education Manjushree N has said that a comprehensive Standard Operating Procedure will be drawn up for future appointments, this is a classic case of locking the stable after the horse has bolted. A similar incident in 2017, which saw 40 assistant professors being debarred for submitting fake documents, should have been a wake-up call. Transparency must be central to reform. Universities should be mandated to publish, on their official websites, verified lists of PhD and MPhil degree holders. All university records relating to mark cards and degree certificates must be digitised. Such a system would not only deter fraud but also help students who have lost documents to obtain them quickly and at low cost.

The scandal points to worrying oversight and possible official complicity. Criminal accountability must be fixed

At the root of the problem is the routine appointment of temporary guest lecturers against existing permanent vacancies. This culture of ad hoc crisis management breeds shortcuts and compromises standards. The government must fill teaching posts as and when vacancies arise, instead of allowing backlogs to pile up. Guest faculty should be restricted to genuine industry experts who teach occasionally, not as substitutes for regular teachers. This episode highlights the need for a comprehensive structural overhaul of Karnataka's education system – one that replaces expediency with integrity and restores public trust through accountability, transparency, and timely governance.

THE RIGHT TO FAIL

How social protection can free India's lost Einsteins

Unlocking India's vast pool of denied genius begins with enabling conditions – a key prerequisite for innovation

K NANJARAJE URS

India's ambition to become a global innovation hub is now part of the official vocabulary. Startup missions, incubators, venture capital flows and digital infrastructure dominate policy conversation. Yet beneath these initiatives lies a quieter but more decisive question: who in India can afford to take risks? Innovation is not simply a function of intelligence or ideas. It is a function of who can fail without falling into ruin. That is why the world's most innovative nations are also the world's most socially secure societies.

Conventional economic thinking treats social security as a burden on dynamism. Welfare, it is argued, dulls incentives and breeds dependence. Global evidence points in the opposite direction. Countries that rank highest on innovation indices are precisely those that protect citizens most comprehensively from the shocks of illness, unemployment, and income loss. Security does not suppress ambition. It equalises the opportunity to pursue it.

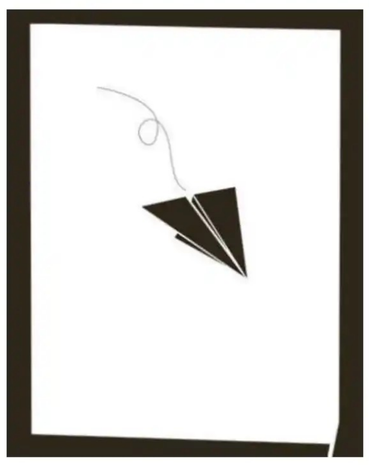
Innovation is inseparable from uncertainty. New enterprises collapse. Research fails. Technologies misfire. Where failure carries catastrophic personal cost, only the already privileged can afford experimentation. Where failure is a stepping-stone, risk-taking becomes socially enabling. This difference, between ruin and recovery, quietly determines how much of a nation's intelligence can participate in innovation.

The Global Innovation Index published by the World Intellectual Property Organisation consistently places Switzerland at the top. Close behind are Sweden, the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands, with Nordic countries occupying much of the upper tier. These are not minimalist states. Switzerland combines high private enterprise with mandatory health insurance, unemployment protection, and strong social guarantees. The Nordic nations operate universal healthcare, income security, robust public schooling, and extensive retraining systems.

In Denmark's well-known "flexicurity" model, retrenched workers receive subsistence protection and reskilling support to recover economic dynamism. Individuals have the right to fail without social annihilation. When the personal downside of risk is capped, the societal supply of risk-takers expands.

In the US, entrepreneurship rates rise sharply among those eligible for Medicare, suggesting that guaranteed healthcare directly enables business formation. Cross-national analyses across developed economies find that higher social protection spending correlates with higher patenting intensity and innovation output. People with stable access to healthcare, education, and income support display greater willingness to retrain, relocate, start new ventures, and invest in long-horizon ideas. Security expands the frontier of aspiration. Without security, risk-taking becomes a hereditary privilege which perpetuates social injustice.

India's innovation challenge is often



framed as inadequate capital, weak infrastructure or limited research spending. These matter. But a deeper structural constraint lies in how insecurity and inherited disadvantage shape life trajectories long before innovation becomes possible.

Caste-based occupations and entrenched poverty operate as social traps. Children born into deprived households frequently encounter limited nutrition, fragile schooling, stigma, and restricted networks. Their innate capabilities – intellectual, creative, and entrepreneurial – remain undiscovered or unsupported. The issue is not the absence of talent. It is the absence of enabling conditions.

Educational attrition magnifies this loss. When households lack income protection, illness or job loss forces children out of school. When quality schooling is uneven, talent identification becomes socially biased. Large numbers of children exit the learning pipeline before their abilities are even recognised. Innovation systems cannot thrive when potential inventors disappear before they reach visibility. This is not only an equity concern. It is a macroeconomic constraint that narrows the nation's cognitive potential.

In 2017, economist Raj Chetty published research now known as the "Lost Einsteins" study. Examining patent records in the US, Chetty found stark disparities in inventor rates by race, gender, and income, with children from high-income families dramatically more likely to become inventors than equally capable children from low-income families. Crucially, measured ability was broadly similar across groups. Opportunity was not.

Chetty estimated that if children from low-income backgrounds, women, and minorities had the same opportunities as high-income white men, the total US innovation output would quadruple. The study's central insight was simple: societies lose vast quantities of genius not because intelligence is scarce, but because opportunity is unevenly distributed.

Apply this lens to India. A country with deep social stratification, uneven schooling, and limited safety nets inevitably loses an even larger share of its potential inventors, designers, engineers, and entrepreneurs. These are India's lost Einsteins.

Security as an equaliser

The promise of social protection is not merely poverty reduction. It is opportunity equalisation. Universal healthcare ensures illness does not dictate destiny. Income protection during unemployment allows families to maintain schooling continuity. Child nutrition safeguards cognitive development. Quality public education broadens talent discovery. Together, these measures distribute the ability to take risks more evenly across society.

Social protection should be seen as innovation infrastructure. Just as electricity and broadband extend market participation, security extends participation in risk-bearing activity. It enlarges the pool of people who can imagine, experiment, fail, and try again. A society that guarantees basic security to all unleashes a much larger imagination of what is possible. It converts denied skills into productive talent.

India's innovation aspirations cannot be realised by startup policies alone. They require a foundational social compact: that citizens may pursue innovation without risking annihilation. India cannot continue losing millions of potential innovators to preventable insecurity.

The greatest resource India possesses is not its market size or demographic dividend. It is the intelligence, creativity, and enterprise currently locked behind social traps. Unlocking that potential demands recognising that security is not the cost of progress. It is its precondition.

The lost Einsteins are waiting. A renewed social security system can bring them into the open, and with them, a far larger imagination of what India can become.

(The writer holds a PhD in Public Policy from NLSIU and is a social scientist based in Australia, specialising in improving governance solutions for social and environmental challenges)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Lost in salsa, found in sambar

What started as nostalgia soon became undeniable hunger

K S VENKATACHALAM

Travel promises discovery—the thrill of unfamiliar streets, new accents, and unexpected tastes. When we landed in the United States for our west coast road trip, we made a bold pact: no Indian food. As lifelong vegetarians, we knew this decision would test our creativity and curiosity. But that was the point. We wanted to taste the world on one vast American platter.

Mexican cuisine welcomed us first, loud and colourful. Tacos bursting with beans, molten-cheese quesadillas, and smoky fajitas quickly became our road-trip staples. Salsa snapped with freshness, guacamole added creamy comfort, and every plate looked like a festival. Vegetarian options were plentiful, and each bite felt spirited and generous.

Chinese food offered a gentler rhythm. We were used to Indo-Chinese flavours back home, but here, the dishes felt subtler, more nuanced. Delicate vegetable dumplings, glossy stir-fried noodles, and tofu infused with soy, ginger, and garlic showed us a different side of the cuisine. Restaurants thoughtfully catered to vegetarians, and we never felt like an afterthought.

Italian meals became our edible embrace after long sightseeing days. Wood-fired pizzas crowned with basil and fresh vegetables, creamy pastas glistening with olive oil, and simple spaghetti *aglio e olio* proved that elegance often lies in restraint. The warmth of tomato, cheese, and herbs felt universal — comfort without complication.

As we crossed states, our culinary map expanded. We devoured falafel wraps from Middle Eastern cafés, bright organic salads, and surprisingly convincing vegan burgers. America revealed itself as a mosaic of global kitchens, each one inviting us in.

But somewhere around week three, a quiet craving began to stir. It appeared in fleeting thoughts — steaming rice, the fragrance of curry leaves, the layered warmth of spices we had grown up with. What started as nostalgia soon became undeniable hunger. We had travelled far in taste, yet something essential felt missing.

Then, one evening, in San Francisco, we came across a modest restaurant which displayed Indian meals in its window. The menu read like poetry — idli, dosa, sambar. Our restraint dissolved instantly.

When the food arrived, the aroma alone felt like a homecoming. Soft idlis dipped into tangy sambar, coconut chutney cooling the spice, and crisp golden dosas wrapped around spiced potatoes — each bite carried memory, identity, and belonging. It wasn't just delicious; it was deeply personal.

That meal taught us something profound. Exploring new cuisines expands the palate, but returning to familiar flavours nourishes the soul. Travel is richest when balanced between adventure and comfort. We cherished every taco, dumpling, and slice of pizza — but it was the humble taste of home that finally made us feel whole.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A thrust towards air dominance

I refer to 'Boost for IAF as India to buy 114 Rafales (Feb 13). The Defence Ministry's Acceptance of Necessity for acquiring 114 Rafale combat aircraft ahead of French President Emmanuel Macron's visit to India is significant at a time when the Indian Air Force faces depleted squadron strength amid evolving regional security challenges. The Rafale is a proven multi-role platform, and its induction can strengthen deterrence, enhance air dominance, and bridge critical capability gaps. The proposal to manufacture a substantial number of aircraft in India, in partnership with the domestic industry, aligns with indigenisation objectives and offers long-term industrial and technological benefits. However, the scale of public expenditure warrants scrutiny. Time-bound accountability, clear delivery milestones, safeguards against cost escalation, and periodic reporting to Parliament are essential to ensure fiscal discipline and timely induction.

K V Chandramouli, Mysuru

Global action imperative

Apropos 'Snow droughts and rising risks' (Feb 13), climate change in the Hindu Kush Himalayas is evolving as a threat, as seen in the dwindling snow cover. Mitigation efforts should be intensified to avoid a serious ecological fallout. This is no longer a crisis of isolated regions. It calls for global climate action, backed with resources and adherence to implementation timelines.

S Sundaresh, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

Other than scamming experience, what are the other qualities people who question my experience have? Yes, we don't have experience in looting.

Vijay, Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam chief

Power attracts the corruptible. Suspect any who seek it.

Frank Herbert

TO BE PRECISE

IN PERSPECTIVE

Ending encounter justice

The killings subvert rules without consequence. Reform is a constitutional choice

AKHIL YADAV

Recently, the Allahabad High Court issued mandatory guidelines regarding the aftermath of police encounters in Uttar Pradesh, which include no instant promotions and gallantry awards for police officers and mandatory separate FIRs. The judgment exposes a constitutional crisis of broader national significance. The observation of Justice Arun Kumar Singh Deshwal that police encounters have 'seemingly become a routine feature' reveals the institutional loop.

The data from UP since 2017 are alarming – 266 deaths and close to 11,000 injuries in over 16,000 police operations. Between 2000 and 2017, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) reported 1,782 cases of alleged fake encounters in India. UP leads the list, with Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Manipur, and Telangana following closely.

In each case, the political economy is the same. Politicians earn points for being 'tough on crime,' police officers get promotions, the public gets immediate relief, and constitutional rights get pushed into the background.

Article 21 of the Constitution safeguards life and personal liberty, mandating that any deprivation be in accordance with a procedure laid down by law. In the case of *Maneka Gandhi vs. Union of India (1978)*, the Supreme Court held that this procedure must be just, fair, and reasonable, not arbitrary, fanciful, or oppressive.

Encounter killings completely disregard this provision. Lives are taken without trial and without recourse. The violation of the Constitution is absolute.

In the case of *PUCL vs. State of Maharashtra (2014)*, the Supreme Court of India made its stand clear – "It is not the duty of the police to kill the accused merely because he is a dreaded criminal." The Court laid down 16 guidelines to regulate encounter killings, requiring FIR, independent probes, magisterial inquiries, and a moratorium on promotions until inquiries are completed. However, this is the exception rather than the rule.

The police also regularly cite the right of private defence as a justification for encounter killings. However, the right of private defence fails constitutional muster. Encounter operations are carefully planned. The risk involved is foreseeable and self-inflicted. The casualty ratios bear out this fact. In UP, 16,284 operations resulted in nearly 11,000 accused getting injured, compared to about 1,800 police personnel. A total of 266 accused were killed, while 18 police officers died. If these encounters were indeed real battles involving equal threats, this imbalance would be inexplicable.

The most disturbing failure is institutional. Between 2017 and 2024, the NHRC received 161 reports about 157 encounter deaths in UP. It found suspicious circumstances in none of these. It held only 10 spot inquiries and recommended zero prosecutions.

This is the case across the country. The NHRC regularly accepts the police account, prefers the executive magistrate inquiry that rarely contradicts it, and responds with compensation in a few cases. The consequence is perverse; the State pays compensation out of the public exchequer, while the police officers are not held criminally liable, and are often given promotions or gallantry awards.

Rule of law weakened

Extrajudicial killings do not enhance the police force; they undermine it. When the police operate with impunity, there is no incentive to conduct proper investigations. Criminology literature makes clear that encounters indicate the State's inability to prosecute according to law and provide a rich soil for corruption, where the ability to conduct encounters becomes an instrument of extortion and control.

This argument has been vindicated by the emergence of 'bulldozer justice.' The UP government's destruction of the property of the accused has been replicated in Madhya Pradesh and Assam. The assumption underlying these actions is anti-constitutional, that procedure is an impediment to justice rather than justice itself.

The data of victims of encounter killings indicate a structural bias. The people killed are largely from the marginalised and economically disadvantaged sections of society, sections that are least likely to challenge State violence. The Allahabad High Court's intervention brings hope, but judicial concern alone cannot be enough.

The Supreme Court must use its contempt power to ensure compliance with PUCL guidelines nationwide. The legislature should incorporate these protections in criminal procedure laws, impose penalties, hold promotions pending independent investigations, mandate body cameras, and give the NHRC the power to prosecute more aggressively.

As Justice Deshwal said, 'The power to punish is vested solely in the courts and not in the police.' This applies nationwide. It must apply everywhere, or the Constitution doesn't apply anywhere. Until India adopts the former line, the Encounter Raj will continue.

(The writer is a Millennium fellow and a law student at the Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar)

The air charter market is booming due to rising affluence and connectivity gaps. But infrastructure and financing reform have not kept pace with the growth

Aviation sector faces a pvt jet stress test

K GIRIPRAKASH

The private aviation industry is thriving on the back of a growing economy, ferrying founders, dealmakers and political leaders across the country. What once felt exceptional now feels routine.

But then came the fatal charter crash near Maharashtra's Baramati earlier this year. Five lives were lost. As private aviation grows — with more aircraft, flights and operators — have the watchdog mechanisms strengthened at the same rate? In simple terms: Are safety systems, infrastructure, and regulatory capacity expanding at the same rate?

The numbers, on the surface, appear steady. According to the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau, since 2014, India recorded between seven and 12 aviation accidents across all civil categories. By November 2025, eight accidents had been recorded for the year.

In total, 104 civil aviation accidents were recorded up to December 31, 2024, of which 91 investigations had been completed. These figures encompass all sectors: scheduled airlines, helicopters, flying schools, general aviation, and non-scheduled charter operators.

However, there is no further classification to separate private business jets operating under the non-scheduled operator permit category and scheduled operators.

India does not publish annual accident totals for the business jet segment. Without that breakdown, it is difficult to measure charter-specific risk. The debate defaults to overall accident counts rather than precise risk exposure. Viewed in isolation, the numbers suggest relative stability. Most years sit in single digits. The peak was 12 in 2022.

However, stability in raw numbers risks masking changes elsewhere.

India now operates more than 150 business jets within a broader general aviation fleet of over 400 aircraft, which includes non-scheduled charter operators, business jets, helicopters, and training aircraft.

Charter and general aviation movements have increased by approximately 20% in recent years as traffic rebounded strongly after the pandemic. More aircraft. More sectors flown. More landings at smaller airfields.

Kanika Tekriwal, founder and chief executive of JetSetGo, describes the shift as structural. "The Indian air charter market is experiencing a significant transition, with a projected compound annual growth rate of 13-15%. Growth is being driven by rising affluence and a persistent connectivity gap in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities," says Tekriwal.

Growth, demand and speed

Industry executives insist the expansion is structural, not speculative.

Bineesh Paul, Director of Charter Flights Aviation, says India has climbed steadily in global rankings. "We stand eleventh in the world today. Three years ago, we were around 15th. The movement has been steady, and the shift is clearly towards developing economies. In fact, in some respects, we are performing better than China," says Paul. He estimates that domestic private aviation growth has averaged 35% annually in recent years. "India is one of the biggest potential markets in the world," he adds.

Charter Flights operates from a dedicated terminal at Hyderabad's AHL Airport. Efficiency is the selling point. "All clearances can be completed in about fifteen minutes. From Bengaluru to Mumbai, we can reach in roughly one hour." The aircraft themselves are built for speed. "Our jets can fly at speeds of around 979 kilometres per hour. Commercial airlines typically cruise closer to 640 kilometres per hour."

That time differential is the core proposition. Clients are not buying luxury alone; they are buying hours. The cost reflects that.

A Bengaluru–Mumbai charter starts at approximately Rs 4.5 lakh. Landing charges can exceed Rs 1 lakh for under 20 minutes on the ground, with parking charged separately. Depending on aircraft type and distance, one-way charters can range from Rs 7 lakh to Rs 25 lakh. Demand, executives say, is pragmatic. Time is a scarce commodity.

Tekriwal adds a perspective to the trend. "It is increasingly becoming functional rather than aspirational. We are seeing a move towards a more customer-centric model, where private aviation is utilised as a 'time machine' for efficient, on-demand mobility across the country."

The Indian air charter market is experiencing a key shift, with a projected CAGR of 13-15%. Growth is being driven by rising affluence and a service gap in connectivity to Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities, she points out.

Yet speed in the air often collides with constraints on the ground.

Tekriwal points to "limited infrastructure at smaller airports, fragmented ground-handling processes, regulatory complexity, and a shortage of trained crew and maintenance, repair and overhaul support in tier two and tier three cities".

Paul offers a blunt assessment of metro capacity. "Delhi and Mumbai airports are completely chock-a-block. The number of private jets is growing in India today, but parking space and hangar facilities are limited," says Paul.

At smaller airstrips, the challenges are more technical.

Rajesh Kumar, Director of Blueheights Aviation, notes that many operate under visual flight rules. "Turboprop aircraft can operate from shorter runways, but jets require more robust infrastructure. Without proper facilities, growth will remain constrained," says Kumar.

It is clear that infrastructure is not merely about convenience, it is also about operational risk. Shorter runways, limited navigational aids and congestion all increase complexity.

Financing and regulation

Kumar identifies financing as the sector's most persistent structural constraint. "If financial institutions start supporting us meaningfully, India can become second only to the United States in private aviation. The demand is certainly there," feels Kumar.

Bringing an aircraft into India can incur freight and associated costs of approximately Rs 1 crore. Banks remain cautious, often treating charter operators as riskier borrowers than scheduled carriers.

On regulation, however, Kumar strikes a more balanced tone. "The DGCA is actually very competent compared with regulators in many parts of the world," Kumar says.

India also prohibits the registration of aircraft older than 20 years, even if they are well-maintained. Operators emphasise oversight. "All aircraft are regulated by the DGCA. We are under constant scrutiny. Safety is non-negotiable," Paul says.

Tekriwal emphasises that safety requirements apply universally. Airworthiness, crew licensing and maintenance standards are mandated, she notes.

Yet transparency remains thinner than in some Western jurisdictions. India does not routinely publish operator-level enforcement statistics or detailed safety performance data for charter operators.

The decade's accident data do not point to systemic failure. Annual totals remain contained. The largest fatalities in recent years have involved scheduled airlines rather than private jets. However, the sector is accelerating—in fleet size, flight frequency, and economic importance.

If expansion continues at double-digit rates, infrastructure investment, financing reform and greater transparency will determine whether private aviation matures into a stable layer of national transport or begins to show strain.

The numbers suggest stability. The trajectory suggests momentum. Whether those two lines continue to move together will define what India's private aviation boom ultimately becomes.

(The writer is a Bengaluru-based senior aviation journalist)

Private Aviation in Indian Skies: Luxury, Speed & Strategic Connectivity

Business jets, also known as corporate or private jets, are a key segment of aviation, offering on-demand, premium air travel for businesses, HNIs, and governments. India is ascending fast in this realm, emerging now as South Asia's largest general aviation market – and growing fast.

MARKET SNAPSHOT*

13-15%
Projected annual growth

$500-550 million
Expected to reach by FY29

FLEET & SCALE*

400+: Private aircraft (jets, turboprops, helicopters)

700+: Expected number of aircraft by 2029

Accounts for **8-10%** of India's **$14.78 billion** aviation sector (2025)

2,400+ private flights per month – tripled in recent years

WHAT'S DRIVING GROWTH?

- Destination weddings & mega events
- Executive travel
- Cricket & sports tournaments
- Political & celebrity travel
- Medical evacuation

Private aviation is no more just indulgence – it's about speed, efficiency, and access where commercial airlines don't operate profitably.

Comforts that define Private Aviation

- Limousine pick-up & drop
- Concierge bookings
- Gourmet catering & personal chefs
- Spa & beauty services
- VIP lounges & crew briefing rooms
- Swift customs clearance

TYPES OF PRIVATE AIRCRAFT IN INDIA

Light Jets (4-8 passengers)
Short regional trips – Examples: Cessna Citation Mustang, CJ2, Phenom 100/300, Beechcraft Premier

Midsize & Super Midsize (7-10 passengers)
Medium-haul business travel – Examples: Hawker 750/800XP/900XP, Gulfstream G150/G200, Citation XLS/Sovereign

Heavy & Long-Range (10-15+ passengers)
International, non-stop travel – Examples: Challenger 604/605, Global 6000/7000, Falcon 2000/8X, BBJ, ACJ

Turboprops (6-9 passengers)
Short runways, remote airports – Examples: King Air series, Pilatus PC-12

Executive Helicopters
Short-range point-to-point – Examples: Agusta AW109, Airbus H160

COST OF FLYING PRIVATE IN INDIA*
Ownership Cost
- **Rs 15 crore** to **Rs 550+ crore** (purchase)
- **Rs 4-10 crore** annually (maintenance, fuel, crew)

CHARTER COST*
Rs 1.5 lakh to **Rs 20 lakh per hour** (depending on aircraft size, range & luxury)

*INDUSTRY ESTIMATES

SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT

The key to living upto 100 years

Alongwith genetic characteristics, more accessible and affordable living conditions help with a longer, healthier life, writes F D Flam

Some people who live to 100 and beyond smoke, drink hard liquor, or down a beer every evening. Others consume ice cream daily or drink three glasses of Dr Pepper. This paradox is one reason several scientists who study extreme ageing were not surprised by a recent study showing that longevity is roughly 50% genetic and 50% environmental—a substantially higher genetic contribution than earlier research indicated.

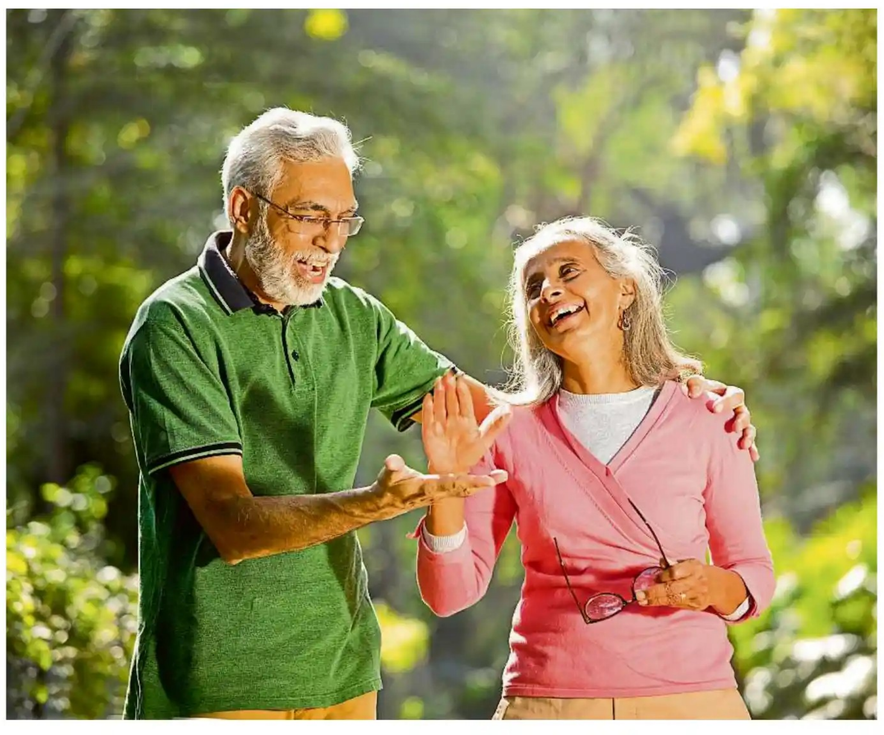
The take-home message isn't that your time on Earth is pre-ordained by your genes. A closer look beyond the headlines reveals something both more promising and more intriguing. For most people, a healthy diet, regular exercise, and adequate sleep can significantly improve the likelihood of living a longer, healthier life.

Yet a small minority of people are born with a rare combination of genes that actually slows the ageing process. These genes make them less susceptible to the usual age-related killers—heart disease, Alzheimer's and cancer—even when they don't consistently follow their doctors' advice.

You don't have to change people's genes to extend longevity. Researchers are beginning to unravel how these genes work and are trying to replicate their effects in the rest of us through drugs or other interventions. At the same time, they're also working toward tailoring medication and dietary advice to an individual's genetic makeup.

The new study, published in *Science* and led by researchers at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel, drew widespread attention for showing that genes play a larger role in longevity than previously believed—contradicting the major 2018 headlines that suggested that genes mattered much less. That earlier research relied on genealogical records stretching back several centuries and may have estimated a much lower genetic contribution—about 7%—because so many people died from infectious diseases.

Several other studies have placed the genetic contribution to longevity at about 20%. But scientists who study ageing say these findings aren't always measuring the same thing. The latest research combined



multiple datasets and employed a mathematical model to filter out deaths from accidents, infectious diseases, and other causes unlikely to be influenced by genes.

Those factors played an even greater role in earlier centuries when widespread early death kept average life expectancy well below 50. Today, life expectancy in the US has increased to nearly 80, even though the human genome hasn't changed.

Not just genes

A key concept is that the balance between genetic and environmental influences changes as people age. "It's really important to make a distinction between what it takes to get into your early 80s, versus what it takes to get to around 100, versus even older ages like 105 or even 110," said Thomas Perls, a geriatrician with Boston University Medical Centre.

Perls, founder and director of the New England Centenarian Study, estimates that longevity into the mid-80s is about 25% heritable and 75% attributable to environmental exposures and health behaviours. Using data collected by his research group, he found that reaching age 100 was 62% heritable, while surviving to even older ages was closer to 80%.

Healthy behaviours, he said, include eating a nutritious diet, maintaining a healthy weight, exercising regularly, not smoking, and drinking alcohol only very occasionally, if not at all. Also important, he added, are managing stress effectively and having a positive attitude toward ageing.

Other researchers agree that a larger genetic role at extreme ages doesn't diminish the benefits of exercise, sleep and diet. We should try to optimise all of those, said Nir Barzilai, director of the Institute for Ageing Research at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. But for a fortunate few, even unhealthy habits fail to shorten their lives.

In a 2011 study of 477 people between the ages of 96 and 109, Barzilai and his colleagues at Yeshiva University's Institute for Aging Research found that these individuals actually had slightly worse behaviours than control subjects. About 50% smoked, roughly half were obese or overweight, and fewer than 50% engaged in even moderate exercise. "So as a group, they didn't behave right at all," Barzilai said.

Despite this, they carried just as many genes associated with cancer, Alzheimer's disease, heart disease and diabetes as the control group. Their advantage was instead linked to carrying genes associated with a slower ageing process—genes that appeared to protect them from those diseases, just as youth protects younger people.

How do these so-called anti-ageing genes work? Barzilai said they tend to suppress hormones that promote growth. Several existing drugs may also do this, including the diabetes drug metformin and widely used GLP-1 inhibitors for diabetes and obesity.

Another reason to suspect that genetic influence increases with age is provided by historical trends. Although life expectancy has risen dramatically in the last century, the proportion of people who live to 100 has changed very little, said Paola Sebastiani, a biostatistician at Boston University.

Researchers also caution that we shouldn't assume all environmental factors are within individual control. Longevity is closely linked to socioeconomic status and exposure to air pollution, among other factors. Helping everyone live a longer, healthier life requires society to make healthy living more accessible and affordable.

Many of the rare elite agers who top 100 do so without becoming frail, spending fortunes, or eating extreme diets of blended vegetables and supplements. Jeanne Calment, the French woman often cited as the longest-lived person on record, reportedly took up smoking when she was living in a nursing home at age 112—and then lived another decade. Still, for most of her life, she exercised regularly, ate fresh foods, and took good care of herself. That combination gives scientists a reason to hope that more of us could one day approach 120 while remaining healthy and enjoying life.

BLOOMBERG

DID YOU KNOW?

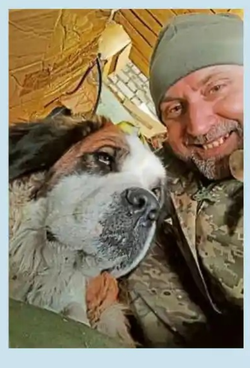
Ukraine's dogs aren't the same anymore, thanks to war

The human cost of the war in Ukraine has been well documented. But Russia's invasion is also affecting the country's pets.

In a study published in December in the journal Evolutionary Applications, a group of researchers found that exposure to the conflict in Ukraine had, over a short period, transformed domesticated dogs into ones that would be found in wild environments.

Scientists gathered a variety of data from 763 dogs across nine regions of Ukraine. The team worked with animal shelters, while veterinarians and volunteers gathered data from stray dogs. Ihor Dykyy, a zoologist at the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, gathered data near the city of Lyman in the Donetsk region, and later close to Kharkiv near the border with Russia, for two years starting in 2022 as a volunteer with the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

Most of the team's findings suggested that dogs on the front line had become more like wild dog species, such as wolves or dingoes.



Examples of the transformation abounded in the data: The front-line dogs rarely had snouts that were either short like a French bulldog's or elongated like a dachshund's. Many also had reduced body mass. Even their ears took on a different shape, with pointed ears more frequent than floppy ears.

But the scientists did not want their findings interpreted as war-fueled accelerated evolution. What's actually happening is the conditions of war favor animals with certain characteristics like less body mass, which makes it easier to hide.

While the study was restricted to dogs, it raises questions about the broader implications of environmental damage caused by war.

"Evidence that dogs are being strongly negatively affected by the horrors of war should serve as an alarm for other species," said Euan Ritchie, a wildlife ecologist at Deakin University in Australia who was not involved in the research. Or as Malgorzata Pilot, leader of the project and a biologist at the University of Gdansk in Poland, put it: "Wars are not only humanitarian crises. They are also environmental disasters."

-NYT

Filmmaker Vikram Bhatt's wife gets bail in cheating case

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court on Friday granted interim bail to filmmaker Vikram Bhatt's wife Shwetambari Bhatt, lodged in central jail in Udaipur, in an alleged Rs 44-crore cheating case.

A bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi ordered Shwetambari's forthwith release by directing the Chief Judicial Magistrate to pass the terms and conditions.

A complaint was filed by Ajay Murdia, the founder of Indira IVF and Fertility Centre, alleging that Bhatt and his wife induced him to invest over Rs 30 crore in a biopic of his late wife, promising him high returns that never materialised.

During the hearing, the court asked if the criminal case was a method to recover the dues, saying, "Unfortunately, they (petitioners) have not sought quashing of the FIR."

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for the accused couple, claimed the complainant, Murdia, wanted movies to be made on himself.

SC to examine if dowry charges apply to live-in relationships

Issues notice to Karnataka govt in Section 498A plea

SCOPE OF LAW

■ The petitioner claims the complainant was not his legally wedded wife and alleges repeated complaints were filed across forums despite earlier closures.

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Friday decided to examine a critical question: whether a man in a live-in relationship or in a relationship in the nature of marriage with a woman can be prosecuted under Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code (which deals with cruelty to a married woman by her husband or his relatives, particularly regarding dowry) or its corresponding provision in the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and N Kotiswar Singh ordered that the Union Ministry of Law and Justice be impleaded and sought the assistance of Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati on behalf of the Centre. The court also issued notice to the Karnataka government on a plea filed by cardiologist Lokesh BH from Shivamogga and others, led by senior advocate Anand Sanjay M Nuli, challenging the Karnataka High Court's judgment of November 18, 2025.

The bench appointed advocate Nina R Nariman as amicus curiae (pro bono) to assist the court and directed her to file written submissions before the next date of listing, March 9.

The petitioner contended that the HC had dismissed his two petitions against FIRs, including one relating to cruelty by a husband or his relatives for dowry, filed by the complainant woman even though she was not his legally wedded wife.

The HC had observed that the rigour of Section 498A IPC extended even to a live-in relationship setup. It also held that the two cases pending against the petitioner under the Section could not continue in two different fora; therefore, the case pending before the Shivamogga court was transferred to the court of the Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Bengaluru.

The petitioner claimed he was married in 2000 and that a daughter was born from the marriage. However, the woman claimed to have married him in 2010 and, in order to harass him and his family members, she filed various complaints before different fora — police authorities and the Karnataka State Women's Commission. All those complaints were closed. Yet again, she filed a complaint in Shivamogga in 2016, in which a chargesheet was filed invoking Section 498A IPC.

A R Rahman told to acknowledge contribution of Dhrupad vocalist

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court on Friday asked music composer A R Rahman to acknowledge the rendition and contribution of Dhrupad vocalist Faiyaz Wasifuddin Dagar in connection with the song "Veera Raja Veera" from the film "Ponniyin Selvan II".

"There should be some acknowledgement. This is not a fight between professionals... Have been traditional worshippers (of classical music)," said a bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi.

The high court was hearing an appeal by Dagar against a September 2025 ruling of a division bench of the Delhi High Court, which set aside an earlier single-judge interim order recognising a prima facie case of copyright infringement.

The bench told Rahman's counsel, senior advocate A M Singhvi, that some of these families, if they had not contributed to classical music, "Do you think these modern singers would have survived in the market?"

Caste is by birth; conversion or marriage doesn't change it: HC

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

In a significant judgment, the Allahabad High Court has held that a person's caste is determined by birth and does not change with a change in religion or marriage.

A single-judge bench comprising Justice Anil Kumar delivered the ruling recently while dismissing a criminal appeal filed by Dinesh and others, who had challenged a summons order issued by a district court in a case registered against them under the SC/ST Act and other sections of the IPC.

The case was filed after a woman from the Scheduled Caste community accused the petitioners of assaulting her and using abusive language that referred to her caste.

The petitioners argued before the HC that although the complainant was born into a Scheduled Caste family, she had married a man from an upper caste and therefore lost her SC status. On this basis, they contended that the summons issued in cases under the SC/ST Act was invalid and should be quashed.

They submitted that the complainant was a resident of West Bengal and belonged to a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe community there. However, since she had married a person from the Jat community, outside her caste, they claimed she could no longer avail herself of the benefits of her original caste status.

The petitioners also argued that they had filed a complaint against the accuser prior to her lodging the complaint. The court dismissed the petition, holding that marriage does not affect a person's caste and that the existence of a cross-case is no grounds to reject a complaint.

The court observed that neither religious conversion nor marriage alters the caste of an individual, which is determined by birth.

Relief for minor student rusticated over meme

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court on Friday allowed a boy, rusticated from his school for allegedly circulating an objectionable meme concerning teachers, to appear in the Class 10 examination.

It directed the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) to issue him an admit card.

A bench of Justices B V Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan noted that the boy had already registered with the CISCE to take the examination and, if not allowed, he would lose an academic year.

The petitioner's counsel, Nipun Saxena, submitted that the boy's rustication from the school in Indore was a disproportionate punishment. He said instead of taking reformatory steps, the school simply disassociated him from it. The bench said the school should have taken the responsibility to reform the child, but rusticated him just because it was found that "he was a bad boy".

The counsel submitted that the boy had been pursuing his studies privately at home with the help of tutors.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie

BOSS, I FEEL LIKE THE MORE I WORK, THE LESS YOU APPRECIATE ME
IF YOU WORKED LESS, DO YOU THINK I'D APPRECIATE YOU MORE?
NOW HE'S GOT ME BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

Hagar The Horrible

I STOPPED TO SEE HOW PRACTICE IS GOING FOR THE UPCOMING TOURNAMENT!
I DON'T KNOW IF YOUR AIM IS TERRIBLE OR TERRIFIC!
I THINK YOU DO!

Beetle Bailey

Peanuts

WHEN YOU'RE FEELING GOOD YOU CAN SIT UP STRAIGHT IN YOUR BEAN BAG...
BUT IF YOU'RE MAD, YOU SINK DOWN
THE MADDER YOU GET...
THE LOWER YOU SINK

Marvin

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

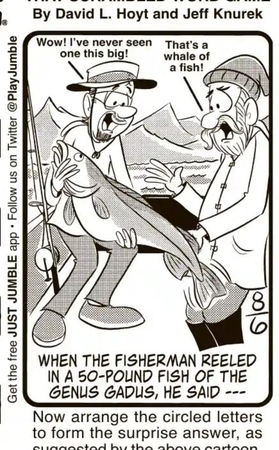
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

AGTLO

GDOAM

CTDHEA

NOLCYO


Wow! I've never seen one this big!
That's a whale of a fish!
WHEN THE FISHERMAN REELED IN A 50-POUND FISH OF THE GENUS GADUS, HE SAID ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: ( ) " ( ) ( ) ( ) " !
(A (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: CURVE FLUID UNSURE FIGURE
Answer: The dogs were finally finished with their fight and were back to being — FRIENDS "FUR-EVER"

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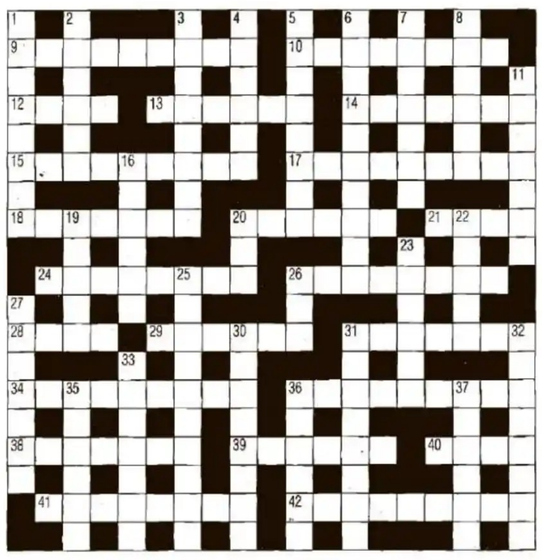
CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 4027



CRYPTIC

ACROSS
9 Making one feel guilty, is irritating (4,5)
10 Stop! Don't switch on again! (5,3)
12 Even out when you have a lucky streak (4)
13 Saw coming out with (6)
14 Ship it requires nerve for one to travel on (7)
15 At risk when telephoning (2,3,4)
17 Meant to carry out the repair, for a change (9)
18 Harass about the large number requiring tenants (7)
20 Proposal put foward as a gesture (6)
21 Puncture that's a real pain in the neck! (4)
24 Rather so myself, wouldn't you agree? (8)
26 Allowed to, though one was hurt by (8)
28 Shorts for children (4)
29 The last one was more friendly with (6)
31 Gets information about the return from savings (4,3)
34 Is it second nature for a gunman to have one? (9)
36 Again having a job after the suspension (9)
38 A saucer from the cupboard (7)
39 Retaining one's balance, don't give in to (6)
40 Tolerable – just (4)
41 Loss of dignity suffered by a grounded pilot? (8)
42 Pretending to be discerning (6,3)

DOWN
1 Are a scream about the allotment! (5-3)
2 Let you know if the steak is coming up (6)
3 He won't introduce his mates to each other (8)
4 Won't work when you try to light it (6)
5 "The colours," you storm, "are glaring" (8)
6 Made little of, in a funny sort of way (7,3)
7 Isolate the bad clues the Ed altered (7)
8 Notes the feet are wobbly and weak (6)
11 Home-made and mended (7)
16 Side with one another (6)
19 A sleeping place for the big rats outside! (5)
20 Dull to get involved with (3)
22 Fat, order some seconds (5)
23 Kids one ensures will have a nap (6)
25 Inspired by the imp who set loose a snake in the monastery? (4,6)
26 Is standing right by the gentleman (3)
27 Having the pearls, leaves high and dry? (7)
30 Getting nice rugs to scatter about (8)
31 He's been called just as you have (8)
32 Create when gate crashing Rene comes in (8)
33 Both drunk and broke (7)
35 I don't bother to insert the key attached to it (4,2)
36 Continue to provide a synopsis (6)
37 Squabbling, are lined up (2,1,3)

ACROSS
9 Uncle-like (9)
10 Rabble-rouser (8)
12 Eye part (4)
13 Street (6)
14 Fiasco (7)
15 Tomfoolery (4,5)
17 Whatsitsname (9)
18 Powerful family (7)
20 Appease (6)
21 Prayer ending (4)
24 Roof window (8)
26 High and dry (8)
28 Betting chances (4)
29 Recently (6)
31 Amusing (7)
34 Shown on TV (9)
36 Quite satisfactory, informally (5-4)
38 Reduction (7)
39 Red gems (6)
40 Pavement edge (4)
41 Greedily consumed (8)
42 Bride's bottom drawer (9)

DOWN
1 Very hungry (8)
2 Excursion (6)
3 Slipshod (8)
4 Planet (6)
5 Very grand (8)
6 Contemptuous (10)
7 Rubbish (7)
8 Internet company (6)
11 Depending (7)
16 Elbow (6)
19 Nude (5)
20 Place (3)
22 Harmonic sounds (5)
23 Damp and clinging (6)
25 Polynesian garment (5,5)
26 Dried grass (3)
27 Porch (7)
30 Place of great riches (8)
31 Union official (8)
32 Idler (8)
33 Pilot (7)
35 Suds (6)
36 Usual practices (6)
37 First batsman (6)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 12353

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 1, Re-C-ap 6, B-each 9, Dropped 10, Nimoy 11, E-GG-Ed 12, Platy 13, Magi-c-Al 15, DIM 17, I-sis 18, Vele-T-a 19, Medes 20, Heeled 22, (basic) Slag 24, Tan 25, Scuttle 26, L-at-Ch. 27, Stein 28, Si-Mon. 29, Million 30, Trip-e 31, Ters-e
DOWN: 2, Ericas 3, A-Don-is 4, P-r-y 5, Spill 6, Bee-tle-s 7, Edgy 8, Credit 12, Pa-re-d 13, Might 14, GI-V-EN 15, Dealt 16, Marge 18, V-etch 19, Me-lanie 21, E-aster 22, Strine 23, Allows 25, Scale 26, LI-MP 28, S-ot

EASY
ACROSS: 1, Cheap 6, Stink 9, Respite 10, Drama 11, Anger 12, Enact 13, Condone 15, Old 17, Area 18, Tenner 19, Beard 20, Skater 22, Soap 24, Eel 25, Defence 26, Ached 27, Larch 28, Rivet 29, Restful 30, Ashes 31, Berth
DOWN: 2, Horror 3, Armada 4, Pea 5, Spine 6, Stacked 7, Tent 8, Needle 12, Enter 13, Cause 14, Nepal 15, Onion 16, Drape 18, Tried 19, Beaches 21, Kebabs 22, Senile 23, Accept 25, Dents 26, Acre 28, Rub

◆SU-DO-KU-6830◆

1	2		7		3			4
					6			
						2	5	
		5			2	3	9	
		9				1		
	3	2	1			4		
	6	4						
			6					
8			9		5		3	2

hard

SOLUTION TO 6829

6	3	8	4	5	2	9	1	7
1	4	9	6	3	7	8	5	2
7	5	2	8	1	9	3	4	6
2	8	3	9	6	1	4	7	5
4	9	1	2	7	5	6	3	8
5	7	6	3	8	4	1	2	9
9	1	7	5	4	8	2	6	3
3	2	5	1	9	6	7	8	4
8	6	4	7	2	3	5	9	1

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

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A1 B3 T1 N1 I1 O1 S1 — Triple Word Score — RACK 1
G2 E1 U1 I1 N1 L1 T1 — Double Word Score — RACK 2
S1 O1 R1 A1 O1 E1 H4 — 3rd Letter Double — RACK 3
O1 K5 R1 E1 V4 S1 E1 — RACK 4

PAR SCORE 145-155
by JUDD
FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

H4 A1 Y4 M3 O1 W4 — RACK 1 = 34
S1 T1 R1 E1 A1 M3 S1 — RACK 2 = 59
S1 H4 O1 O1 K5 — RACK 3 = 22
S1 A1 V4 A1 G2 E1 — RACK 4 = 30
PAR SCORE 95-105 — JUDD'S TOTAL 145

HITORI-3284

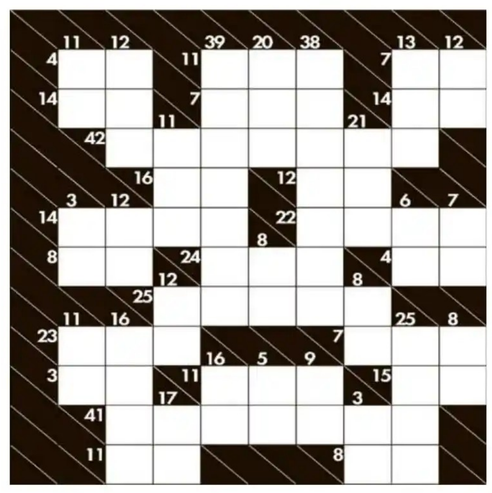
1	4	3	4	3	6	8	7
5	4	3	7	2	3	1	4
2	1	8	4	3	7	8	4
4	3	1	5	4	2	7	8
4	8	4	1	7	5	4	3
8	3	7	4	4	7	5	1
7	2	7	3	8	4	3	5
1	7	6	5	1	8	4	4

SOLUTION TO 3283

2	■	7	5	1	4	6	3
7	8	■	3	■	2	■	1
■	5	2	■	8	6	1	4
1	■	3	6	2	■	7	5
3	1	6	■	4	5	■	2
6	■	1	4	5	■	3	7
4	3	■	2	■	1	8	■
5	■	8	7	3	■	2	6

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

KAKURO- 3284



SOLUTION TO 3283

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3827

■			6		1		7	■
	■		2			8	4	1
		■	9	8		■	6	
			■		8			
				■		5	1	
			■		■	7		
		■			9	■		
4	■		7	2		3	■	
■	2		1		6			■

SOLUTION TO 3826

9	7	5	3	8	6	2	4	1
3	6	1	7	4	2	9	5	8
8	4	2	1	9	5	3	7	6
4	2	8	5	6	9	7	1	3
6	1	3	2	7	8	4	9	5
7	5	9	4	3	1	6	8	2
1	3	6	9	5	4	8	2	7
5	8	4	6	2	7	1	3	9
2	9	7	8	1	3	5	6	4

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

Banks should stop minimum balance fines: House panel

Rs 4,817.96 crore collected as penalties in 2024–25

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

As public and private sector banks collected Rs 4,817.96 crore as penalties in 2024–25 for not maintaining the minimum balance in savings accounts, a Parliamentary committee has recommended that all banks stop levying such fines and that the RBI and the Department of Financial Services consider issuing necessary guidelines.

Instead of penalising customers for not maintaining the prescribed minimum balance in their accounts, the Lok Sabha Petitions Committee said banks may encourage higher balances through incentives such as reward points, fee waivers and interest rate benefits for customers maintaining consistent deposits.

The recommendation followed a complaint by Parameswaran Krishna Iyer of Bengaluru, who claimed that penalties levied by banks are "often disproportionately high", causing undue financial stress to account holders, particularly those from economically weaker sections.

Iyer also said that a customer maintaining the minimum balance is rewarded with only the savings bank interest rate, which is low, but the penalty charged for not maintaining it is 15 to 20 times the amount that the customer would receive as interest for maintaining the balance. This disparity between the interest earned and the penalty is unjust and adds to the financial burden on customers, the petition said.

Examining the complaint, the committee, in its report tabled in the Lok Sabha on Thursday, referred to instances of a bank deducting Rs 440 from Rs 500 deposited as MGNREGA wages in the account of a woman labourer in Bihar, and another bank deducting Rs 2,500 from Rs 5,000 deposited by a man in his son's account due to non-maintenance of the minimum balance.

The RBI had allowed banks to collect penalties from account holders who were not maintaining the minimum balance. According to statistics, public sector banks collected Rs 2,045.21 crore and 13 private banks garnered Rs 2,772.21 crore as penalties in this regard in 2024–25.

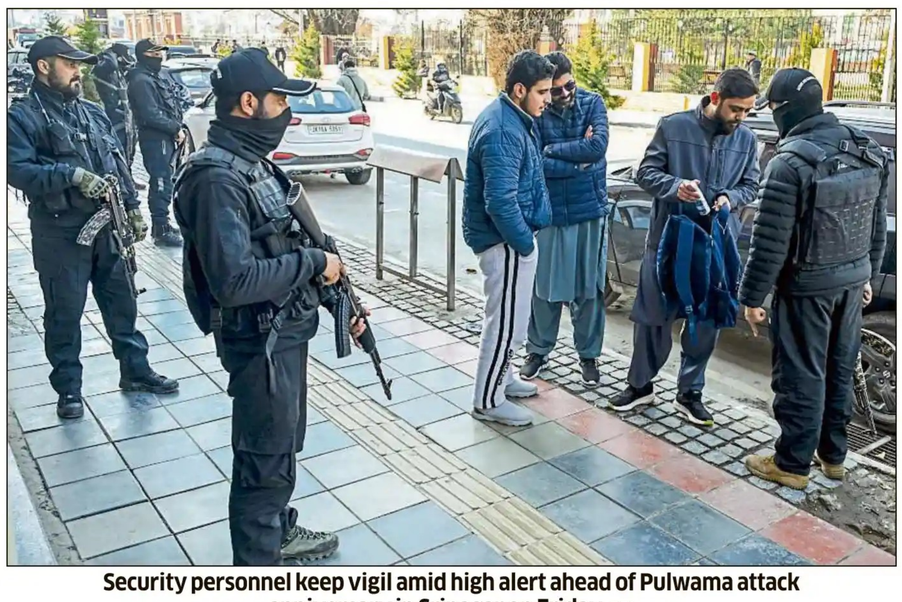
According to the 15-member multi-party panel headed by BJP MP Chandra Prakash Joshi, no direction or guideline on the subject has been issued by the RBI, though most public sector banks have decided to waive minimum charges.

After "carefully evaluating the fine balance between the autonomy given to banks and the interest of account holders, especially those belonging to economically vulnerable sections of society", the committee recommended that "all banks — whether private or public sector — should adopt a uniform policy" of not charging penalties for failure to maintain the minimum balance in regular savings accounts.

CUSTOMER-CENTRIC

- The committee recommends banks encourage higher balances through rewards, fee waivers and better interest benefits instead of imposing fines.
- Complaints highlight disproportionately high penalties – sometimes 15–20 times the interest earned – causing financial stress, especially for economically weaker account holders.

TIGHT SECURITY IN KASHMIR



Security personnel keep vigil amid high alert ahead of Pulwama attack anniversary in Srinagar on Friday. PTI

DGCA fines Air India for operating plane without certification

MUMBAI/NEW DELHI, PTI

Aviation safety watchdog Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has imposed a fine of Rs 1 crore on the Tata Group-owned Air India (AI) for operating an Airbus A320neo aircraft without the requisite airworthiness certification on at least eight routes last year, according to sources.

The DGCA, on December 2 last year, said it was probing the incident of Air India operating an A320neo plane without a requisite airworthiness certification on at least eight routes. The sources on Friday said the regulator had slapped a Rs 1-crore fine on Air India for the violations.

"Air India acknowledges the receipt of a DGCA order in relation to an incident that was voluntarily reported back in 2025.

All identified gaps have since been satisfactorily addressed and shared with the authority," said the airline in a statement.

On November 26, 2025, the airline informed the DGCA about the flying of the A320 aircraft with the expired airworthiness review certificate (ARC) on eight revenue sectors.

The ARC is issued annually to an aircraft after a comprehensive review of its maintenance records, physical condition and verification of compliance with all airworthiness standards. It is a validation of an aircraft's main certificate of airworthiness.

Under the norms, Air India has been delegated the powers to issue the ARC for an aircraft.

Tata Group-owned Air India previously faced regulatory actions for certain violations as well.

Sabarmati Ashram revamp to be completed by March

AHMEDABAD, DHNS: The Gujarat government on Friday announced that the Rs 1,200-crore Sabarmati Ashram redevelopment project will be completed by March.

Restoration work on 22 of the 28 buildings has already been finished, and the remaining work is expected to be completed by March.

The announcement followed a meeting of the governing council of the Mahatma Gandhi Sabarmati Ashram Memorial Trust, the government-run body implementing the redevelopment project.

The meeting in Gandhinagar was chaired by Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, with Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghvi — who also serves as vice-chairman of the council — BJP MP and trust member Narhari Amin, Kartikeya Sarabhai, chairman of the Sabarmati Ashram Memorial and Preservation Trust, among others, in attendance.

The government stated that around 98,000 trees and saplings and an additional 16,000 are expected to be planted by the time the redevelopment work is completed in March 2026.

AIIMS Delhi 1st in country to launch face-transplant programme

NEW DELHI, PTI

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, has become the first in the country to announce the introduction of face transplantation, a highly advanced and complex reconstructive procedure.

The Department of Plastic, Reconstructive and Burns Surgery at AIIMS has initiated the process of setting up a registry of patients who have severe facial deformities along with the loss of vital functions of the face —like breathing, mouth-opening, and blinking — and have not benefited despite multiple surgical procedures.

The department is also organising an intensive cadaveric workshop and academic training programme from February 11 to 15 at the Burns and Plastic Surgery Block. As part of the workshop, facial skin was harvested from a brain-dead patient on Thursday.

To lead this advanced training initiative, AIIMS hosted Dr Indranil Sinha, Associate Chief of Plastic Surgery at Brigham and Women's Hospital (Harvard Medical School), Boston, an internationally recognised expert in composite tissue allotransplantation and face transplant surgery. Dr Maneesh Singhal from the Department of Plastic Surgery will lead the programme with other faculty members, Dr Shashank Chauhan, Dr Raja Tiwari, Dr Rajkumar Manas, Dr Shivangi Saha and Dr Aparna Sinha.

The programme included hands-on cadaveric workshops, focused academic lectures, interdisciplinary discussions with the ENT, Maxillofacial Surgery, Nephrology, Immunology, Pathology, Psychiatry, Critical Care, Anatomy and Organ Retrieval Banking Organisation (ORBO).

Singhal, head of the Department, Plastic, Reconstructive and Burns Surgery, AIIMS, said that there are a large number of patients suffering from devastating facial deformities due to acid burns, gunshot injuries and trauma even after 10-12 surgeries. "Identifying the right candidate and counselling becomes essential before considering them for face transplantation," Singhal said.

Proposed interfaith marriage triggers tension in Meerut

LUCKNOW, DHNS: A proposed interfaith marriage has triggered tension in Meerut, with saffron outfits forcing the owner of the wedding venue to cancel the booking and threatening to hold a "mahapanchayat" to deliberate on the matter.

As a precautionary measure aimed at thwarting the "mahapanchyat", the police on Friday restricted the movement of All India Hindu Suraksha Sangathan president Sachin Sirohi, and kept him under house arrest. Security personnel were also deployed at the wedding venue after the saffron leaders announced they would hold their meeting there. Police personnel were also deployed at the house of the bride.

"We will not let a Hindu girl marry a Muslim man under any circumstances," Chaudhary Dharmendra Malik, the regional chief of the outfit, said.

He said that the organisation would hold the "mahapanchayat" on the road if the administration did not allow it at the wedding venue.

Elephant tusks stolen from military camp

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS: Two elephant tusks worth nearly Rs 2 crore have been stolen from the Pangode military station in Thiruvananthapuram.

The theft from the high-security premises has raised serious concerns. Initial suspicion points to people linked to the arrangements for a DJ party at the officers' mess.

University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore
NAAC A' Accredited,Estate Office, GKVK, Bengaluru-560 065.

No.EO/TN/SECURITY&UPKEEPING/2025-26 Dated : 12-02-2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through Kpp Portal only)

The University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore has invited Tender in Two cover system in the prescribed form as per Standard Tender Document from the reputed Security and Upkeeping Agencies for the following works. The details of the notification, condition of two cover system, schedule, specifications are available in the website www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in. The cost of tender document is as per e-procurement portal. The EMD has to be paid in the e-procurement portal using e-procurement payment mode.

Sl. No.	Description	Approximate Amount put to Tender in lakhs	E.M.D. (in ₹)
1.	Providing Security arrangements at GKVK and Hebbal Campus.	586.50	8,79,750
2.	Providing Security and Upkeeping arrangements at Sericulture College, Chintamani.	77.00	1,54,000
3.	Providing Upkeeping arrangements at GKVK and Hebbal Campus.	419.50	6,29,250

Duration: 1 Year. The above works will be under two cover system and the conditions for two cover systems is also uploaded in the website.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (1) Pre-bid Meeting Estate Office at : **21-02-2026 at 10.30 a.m. (2)** Last date for uploading of Tender **23-02-2026 upto 4.00 p.m. (3)** Opening of Technical Bid **25-02-2026 at10.30 a.m. (4)** Opening of Financial Bid **28-02-2026 at 10.30 a.m.**

Further, details can be had from the office of the undersigned during working hours and also refer UAS **website.www.uasbangalore.edu.in.** The tenderers need to register with e-procurement portal and to obtain user ID and password for participating in e-procurement portal. For more details please contact e-portal help desk at support@eprochelpdesk.com or **8046010000/8068948777** on working days and this office during working hour, **Phone No.080-23332765.**

Sd/-
ESTATE OFFICER

DIPR/CP/RO5636/AAPL/2025-26

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
U.R. RAO SATELLITE CENTRE
CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE GROUP
HAL Old Airport Road, Bangalore - 560 017
(Phone: 080 25084156, 4184)
CORRIGENDUM - II

Sl.No	Description	Details
1	Name of work	Annual Rate Contract for Washing & Pressing of Liveries of URSC and Health Centre, Jeevan Bhima Nagar, Bengaluru.
2	E-Tender Notice No.	URSC/C&MG/C/M/30/2025-26 dated: 02/01/2026
3	Estimated cost put to tender	₹ 8.17 Lakhs
4	Period during which the tender document can be downloaded.	Extended upto 16.30 hrs on 24/02/2026
5	Last date and time for receipt of tenders	Up to 14.30 hrs. on 27/02/2026
6	Due date and time of opening of tenders	After 14.30 hrs on 27/02/2026

Interested tenderers may please refer Detailed Notice Inviting E-Tender (NIET) for eligibility criteria and other details along with Hindi version in website: www.isro.gov.in and download the tender documents from www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO.

Sd/-,
Group Director, C&MG

KALYAN KARNATAKA ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION VIJAYAPUR DIVISION

NO:KKRTC:VJP:TR:COMM:3403:2025-26 Dated:12.02.2026

E-Tender Publication [No: 2025/09

VIJAYAPUR DIVISION INVITED E-TENDER FOR CYCLE STAND OPEN SPACE NUMBER: 02 AT SATTALITE BUS STAND VIJAYAPUR, LAST DATE FOR TENDER SUBMISSION 02.03.2026, TENDER OPENING DATE: 05.03.2026. FOR MORE DETAILS VISIT https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in OR CONTACT D.T.O :7760992252 OR VISIT DIVISIONAL OFFICE DURING OFFICE HOURS.

Sd/- Divisional Controller,
K.K.R.T.C Vijayapur Division.

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/699/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
ZILLA PANCHAYATH, BELLARY
Office of the Executive Engineer, P.R.E. Division, Bellary.

No. EE/PRED/BLY/AE-1/Various Heads/2025-26/1907 Dt. 10-02.2026

Tender Notification (Through KPPP Portal only)

On behalf of Hon'ble Governor of Karnataka tenders are invited from the eligible contractors who have enrolled in Panchayath Raj Engineering Department for 04 works comprising of approved Road and Building works under 2024-25 KKRDB, 2024-25 Dr. Saabanna Talwar MLC and 2024-25 5054 Flood Grant through KPPP portal.

Indent No.
1.RDPR/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT24567
2.RDPR/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT24283
3.RDPR/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT22526
4.RDPR/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT22542

Contractors are required to submit the tender before 24-02-2026 at 4.30 PM by uploading the relevant documents through KPPP portal website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in by downloading the formats for submission of tenders from 10-02-2026 to 24-02-2026 at 4.30 PM. Tenders will be opened through KPPP portal on 25-02-2026 at 05.30 PM. Any changes in the notification will be published KPPP website only. Accepting/rejection of tenders without assigning reason is reserved. Any details can be obtained in person at the office or through telephone No. 08392-266173.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Panchayath Raj Engineering Division Ballari
DIPR/Ballari/998/KSMCA/2025-26

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ತಾಲೂಕಾ ಆಸ್ಪತ್ರೆ, ಯಲ್ಲಾಪುರ
ತಾ॥ ಯಲ್ಲಾಪುರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ: ಉತ್ತರ ಕನ್ನಡ–581 359
ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 08419–261103 E-mail: amoth.yellapur@gmail.com
ಸಂ: ತಾ.ಆ.ಯ: ಟೆಂಡರ್/216/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 12–02–2026

ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

2026–2027 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿಗೆ ತಾಲೂಕಾ ಆಸ್ಪತ್ರೆ, ಯಲ್ಲಾಪುರ ಜಿ॥ ಉತ್ತರ ಕನ್ನಡ ಇಲ್ಲಿಯ ಆಸ್ಪತ್ರೆಗೆ ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆ ಬಾಹ್ಯ ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಗ್ರೂಪ್ "ಡಿ" / ನಾನ್–ಕ್ಲಿನಿಕಲ್ ಸೇವೆಯನ್ನು ಪೂರೈಸಲು ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಸದರಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ ವೇಳಾ ಪಟ್ಟಿಯು ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನಂತಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ; 08389–261103 ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ ವಿಳಾಸ: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳ ವಿವರ: (1) ಗ್ರೂಪ್ "ಡಿ" / ನಾನ್ ಕ್ಲಿನಿಕಲ್ ಸೇವೆಯನ್ನು ಪೂರೈಸಲು, ಪೂರೈಸಬೇಕಾದ ಗ್ರೂಪ್ "ಡಿ" / ನಾನ್ ಕ್ಲಿನಿಕಲ್ ಸೇವೆಯ ನೌಕರರ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 20, ಒಟ್ಟೂ ಟೆಂಡರ ಮೊತ್ತ: ರೂಪಾಯಿ 57,85,560=00, ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. ಮೊತ್ತ: 2.5 %: ರೂಪಾಯಿ 1,44,639=00

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ವೇಳಾ ಪಟ್ಟಿ: ವಿವರಗಳು: (1) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 12–02–2026 (2) ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಪಾರಂಭಿಸುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 12–02–2026 (3) ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ: 13–03–2026 ಮಧ್ಯಾಹ್ನ: 04.15 ಘಂಟೆಗೆ (4) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ: 16–03–2026 ಮಧ್ಯಾಹ್ನ: 04.15 ಘಂಟೆಗೆ (5) ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ: ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಂಗೀಕಾರ ಸಮಿತಿಯ ಅನುಮೋದನೆಯ ನಂತರ.

* ಮೇಲಿನ ದಿನಾಂಕಗಳಂದು ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ರಜೆಯಿಂದ ಘೋಷಣೆಯಾದಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಂದಿನ ಕೆಲಸದ ದಿನಾಂಕವನ್ನು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ಆಡಳಿತ ವೈದ್ಯಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು
ತಾಲೂಕಾ ಆಸ್ಪತ್ರೆ, ಯಲ್ಲಾಪುರ,
ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ: ಉತ್ತರ ಕನ್ನಡ

DIPR/KWR/KSMCA/1087/25-26 dt.12.02.2026

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT,
DIVISION, CHITRADURGA

No.EE:PWD:CTA:AE-1,2:Tender-61:2025-26
Dated:- 12.02.2026

SHOR TERM E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tenders are invited from registered Contractors in KPWD for the following work through KPPP Portal as per standard tender documents rules.

Name of work:- Two cover System:- Head of Account 4059-80-051-0-60-132 CMIDP Works:- (1) Improvements to Kumuta Kadamadagi road (SH-48) from Ch 244.89 to 265.91 Km and 270.85 to 285.57 Km selected reaches in Chitradurga Taluk (WI.33310) **Estimate Cost Rs. in Lakhs:-**400.00

(2) Improvements to D.S.Halli to CTM road from Ch 9.00 to 14.00 Km selected reaches in Chitradurga Taluk (WI.31430)/call-2 **Estimate Cost Rs. in Lakhs:-**350.00

(3) Repairs to Chitranayakanhalli-Bhoganahalli Road via Banavigondanahalli from Km 5.50 to 6.30 and Construction of Bridge at Km 5.80 in Challakere Taluk. (W.I. 32981) **Estimate Cost Rs. in Lakhs:-**100.00

Sl. No. 1 and 2 Tenders dates are as mentioned below: (1) Late Date & time for Tender Queries/ Clarifications 26-02-2026 Time: 17.30 **(2)** Last Date & time for receipt of tenders 27-02-2026 Time: 16.00 **(3)** Date & time for opening of Technical Bid 02-03-2026 Time: 11.00 **(4)** Date & time for opening of Financial Bid 04-03-2026 Time: 11.00

Sl. No. 3 Tender dates are as mentioned below: (1) Late Date & time for Tender Queries/ Clarifications 18-02-2026 Time: 17.30 **(2)** Last Date & time for receipt of tenders 19-02-2026 Time: 16.00 **(3)** Date & time for opening of Technical Bid 20-02-2026 Time: 16.15 **(4)** Date & time for opening of Financial Bid 23-02-2026 Time: 11.00

Further details can be obtained from this office and H.P. Company helpline Numbers 080-25501216 and 080-25501227.

DIPR/CTA/KSMCA/669/2025-26

Sd/- Executive Engineer
PWD, Chitradurga.

An autonomous Institute under Government of Karnataka
K.H.PATIL INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, GADAG
Formerly called as Gadag Institute of Medical Sciences,
Gadag Mulagunda Road, Mallasamudra Gadag-582103
Ph No. 08372-200601 E-mail Id: gimsgadag@gmail.com
Website : www. gimsgadag.karnataka gov.in
No: KHPIMS/Tender/Drugs/2025-26 /168 Date : 13.02.2026

E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Call of Drugs and Miscelleneous Tenders, to K H Patil Institute of Medical Sciences, Teaching Hospital Gadag. Tender has been floated in E-Portal DME/2025-26/IND1997 (https://karnataka.gov.in) Interested Institutions, Manufacturers and suppliers can visit above website from **14.02.2026** to **17.03.2026** by evening 4:00 PM, If any queries contact below Signed Person in time of Govt Working Days. (Approx Amount Rs. **5.39** Cr)

Sd/- Director,
K H Patil Institute of Medical Sciences,
Gadag

DIPR/Gadag/KSMCA/649/2025-26

KARNATAKA HOUSING BOARD
3rd Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road,
Bengaluru - 560009.

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)

Karnataka Housing Board invites tenders from the eligible Pre qualified contractors & willing to Pre qualify in Karnataka Housing Board through Karnataka public procurement portal for below mentioned works.

Sl.No.	Name of the work
1	Providing-2 Nos of 11 KV feeder line by using HT UG cable & 2 No.s of MCVCB swich gears pertaining to the Composite Housing Scheme at Devagiri, Yellapura & Karjagi – Haveri Distric. **Work Indent No.:** KHB/2023-24/EL/WORK_INDENT 196/Call-2 & IFT No.23/2024-25 Date : 10.02.2026. **Amount put to tender:** Rs.4,66,88,379/-.
2	Construction of Karnataka Food and Civil Supplies Corporation Limited, Warehouse at Lingarajapura, Bengaluru Urban Distric. **Work Indent No.:** KHB/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT 709 & IFT No.154/2025-26 Date : 11.02.2026 **Amount put to tender:** Rs.1,78,18,169/-.

Last date for submission of bid: 25.02.2026 upto 4.00 PM

For further information, contact below mentioned office address: Executive Engineer, Karnataka Housing Board, Cauvery Bhavan, Bengaluru. Telephone No: 080-22273511/080-22100077, Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Karnataka Housing Board, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/5656/AKAR/2025-26

HUBLI ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(Wholly Owned Govt. of Karnataka Undertaking)
Superintending Engineer (Ele), O&M Circle,
Shivaganga Layout, HESCOM Hubli-23
Phone No : 0836-2364144, Fax No : 0836-2366184,
E-Mail : seehbl.hescom@gmail.com GST No: 29AABCH3176JEZZ
Corporate Identity Number (CIN) : U31401KA2002SGC030437
No: HESCOM/SEE/EEE(O)/AEE-1/F-48/2025-26/4773-75
Date : 11-02-2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPPP Portal Only)

Superintending Engineer(Ele), O and M Circle, HESCOM, Hubballi has invited Tender for Providing additional 1X100KVA Distribution Transformer at Fateshawali Darga near Indipump on F-6, A7 Trunk feeder in Chanakyapuri section of O & M City Sub-Division-2, HESCOM, Hubballi of Urban Division, Hubballi under Partial Turn key and lumpsum Basis in Two cover system. The details of work tender indent : HESCOM/2025-26/EL/ WORK_INDENT974.

The detailed notification regarding the bid enquiry can be obtained by logging on to the website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ on or after **16/02/2026** for further information, please contact telephone **9480883827/ 9448370227** during office hours.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, (Ele)
O&M Circle Office,
HESCOM, Hubballi.

DIPR/DWD/KSMCA/1232/2025-26

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Public Works Department
Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi

No/PWD/CKD DIV/AE-3/TENDER/2025-26/7121 DATE: 12/02/2026

E-Tender Notification

Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi has invited item wise e-Tenders from Eligible registered contractors for the works coming under the jurisdiction of Chikodi PWD Division 1 works under head of account 4059-CMIDP, Amount put to tender is Rs. 99.22 Lakhs.

Calendar of events: 1)Pre-bid meeting date: 16-02-2026 at 11.00 AM, at The O/o the under signed. 2)Last date for queries & clarifications : 25-02-2026 up to 5.30 PM, 3)Last Date of Receipt of Bids : 27-02-2026 up to 5.00 PM,4)Date of opening of Technical bids (Two Cover System): 02-03-2026 at 4.30 PM, 5)Date of opening of Financial bids (Two Cover System): "after approval of Technical bids", 6)If no bid received auto extension will be done by e-proc itself for 2 days.

For more information & forms of tender can be downloaded from kppp.karnataka.gov.in & departmental web site www.kpwd.gov.in. Further details can be collected from O/o Executive Engineer Public Works Dept.,Division Chikkodi during working hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer
PWD Division Chikodi.

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-1841/KSMCA/2025-26

Friday the 13th spooks markets

Sensex tanks 1,048 points; IT stocks battered

BENGALURU, DHNS

Artificial Intelligence (AI) disruption fears continue as IT stocks tumble, leading to a sharp fall of benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty. Both plunged over 1% on Friday.

In a volatile session, the 30-share BSE Sensex plunged 1,048.16 points, or 1.25%, to close at 82,626.76. The 50-share NSE Nifty plunged 336.10 points, or 1.30%, to settle at 25,471.10.

Shares of Infosys were down 1.28% to close at Rs 1,369.50 on Friday on the BSE. TCS, Wipro and HCLTech shares were down 2.17%, 2.19% and 1.43%, respectively.

Hindustan Unilever, Eternal, Titan, Tata Steel, Adani Ports, PowerGrid, Reliance Industries, Bharat Electronics Ltd, Asian Paints, Mahindra & Mahindra and HDFC Bank, were the major laggards.

In the last week, the benchmark indices witnessed profit-booking at higher levels. The Nifty ended 0.87% lower, while the Sensex was down by 950 points. Among sectors, the IT index lost the most, shedding over 8%, whereas the Media index outperformed, rallying over 5%, said Amol Athawale, VP Technical Research, Kotak Securities.

During the week, the market consistently faced selling pressure near the 26,000/84,500 level. Technically, after a promising uptrend, the market has formed a reversal pattern near the said level, and it also formed a bearish candle on the weekly chart, which is largely negative, he added.

IT stocks are falling due to growing concerns over the impact of AI.

"Domestic equities ended lower, weighed down by weak global cues ahead of the upcoming US inflation data. Sentiment gains from the US-India trade deal have faded as renewed AI-disruption fears weigh on risk appetite, with markets worrying that Indian IT firms dependent on the labour arbitrage model may face tougher competitive pressure than their NASDAQ peers," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

This cautious tone extended across the broader market, pulling all major indices into negative territory, with most sectors closing in the red, he added.

Concerned over AI competition, IT stocks are hit across Europe and the US, leading to a sell-off in IT stocks in India in tandem with Wall Street.

"AI is clearly compressing the work in the software development life-cycle (SDLC), which is bringing growth down. Growth should accelerate once firms start moving to broad-scale AI transformation. However, this still seems to be a few years away," Peter Bendor-Samuel, Founder and Executive Chairman, Everest Group, said.

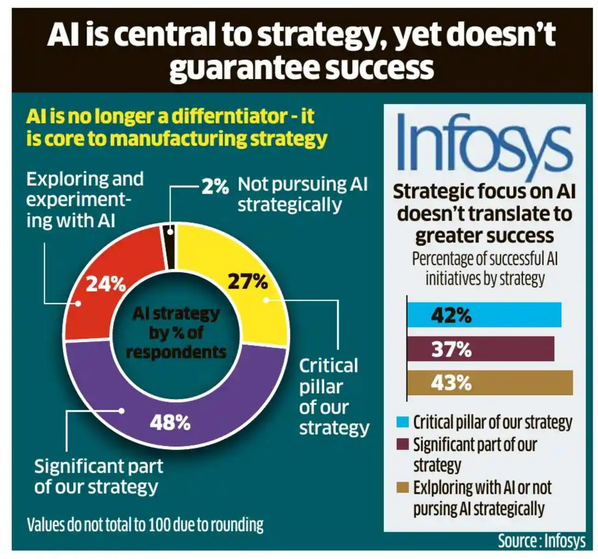
Though IT stocks have been plunging for a week now, analysts remain bullish on the sector's opportunity in the long term. Recently, Ashok Soota, an IT veteran and Founder of Happiest Minds Technologies, said these developments (such as Anthropic's plugins) represent a significant opportunity and not a threat.

"We view Anthropic's innovation as a catalyst for growth, reinforcing the essential role of IT services in guiding organisations through technological transformation. There is a lot of excitement around AI platforms and plugins, and rightly so, since they drastically lower the entry barrier for creating software. However, this does not reduce the need for companies like ours. In fact, it enhances the same," he said.

Over 50% of manufacturers allocate $2 million per AI implementation, says Infy

Highlights AI's rapid transition from experimentation to enterprise

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS


AI is central to strategy, yet doesn't guarantee success
AI is no longer a differntiator - it is core to manufacturing strategy
Exploring and experimenting with AI
2% Not pursuing AI strategically
24%
27%
AI strategy by % of respondents
48%
Critical pillar of our strategy
Significant part of our strategy
Values do not total to 100 due to rounding
Infosys
Strategic focus on AI doesn't translate to greater success
Percentage of successful AI initiatives by strategy
42%
37%
43%
Critical pillar of our strategy
Significant part of our strategy
Exlploring with AI or not pursing AI strategically
Source : Infosys

Over 50% of manufacturers allocate more than $2 million per AI implementation. Infosys has released its inaugural Manufacturing Tech Index: AI Pulse, which shows a clear evolution in AI deployment among enterprises. It said AI is no longer a differentiator as it is now core to manufacturing strategy. "A median investment of $2 million to $2.5 million per AI initiative reflects a clear commitment to deploying AI at production scale," the report said.

The research study developed by Infosys Knowledge Institute, the research and thought leadership arm of the IT services giant, highlighted AI's rapid transition from experimentation to enterprise imperative and the challenges that continue to shape adoption at scale.

Unlike enterprise IT or analytics use cases, cost isn't driven solely from model acquisition, but from embedding into physical operations and from data engineering, system integration, and workforce enablement, it said.

The report added that companies that achieve early results, reinvest and expand successful AI use cases. It also pointed out that AI adoption is highest in cybersecurity and operational technology (OT) systems. However, cybersecurity also stands out as the top barrier to scaling AI, with risk expected to increase as IT and OT environments converge.

The IT company's clients have now started to launch AI in sales, services and aftermarket to meet customer experiences. One in five AI initiatives have started to meet business objectives, and manufacturers overall are investing heavily in AI, embedding AI in company strategy.

The report also added that to achieve more value from AI, companies must address cybersecurity and data challenges and prepare their workforce to use AI.

Interestingly, the cost of AI is cited as one of the biggest blockers to AI pursuits for many companies, but it is not so for manufacturers. Both cybersecurity (23%) and data (21%) have emerged as the top two barriers to AI scaling.

"The findings show a clear evolution in AI deployment. Manufacturers' confidence in AI is rising as they move from experimentation to operationalisation. The next frontier requires integrating AI into core processes and addressing foundational challenges such as cybersecurity and data readiness," Jasmeet Singh, Executive VP and Global Head, Manufacturing.

Anthropic raises $30 billion in funding; to power infra expansion

BENGALURU, DHNS

AI company Anthropic has raised $30 billion in a funding round at a $380-billion post-money valuation. The company's valuation has doubled in just five months. In September last year, it raised $13 billion and was valued at $183 billion.

The recent round was co-led by D. E. Shaw Ventures, Dragoneer, Founders Fund, ICONIQ, and MGX. The investment will fuel frontier research, product development, and infrastructure expansions.

The company said the investment will help deepen its research, continue to innovate in products, and ensure that it has the resources to power infrastructure expansion.

Anthropic launched its newest model — Opus 4.6 — last week, which can power agents that manage entire categories of real-world work, generating documents and spreadsheets. Recently, the company released open-source plugins for Claude Cowork, leading to a massive sell-off in IT stocks.

The company's rival OpenAI has the largest tech fundraising round so far. In March last year, it closed a $41 billion round, which includes a $30 billion contribution from SoftBank. OpenAI recently launched a new Codex model — GPT-5.3-Codex.

AI startups have been receiving significant funding from venture capitalists as fund-houses are betting on the latest AI tools and features.

"Whether it is entrepreneurs, startups, or the world's largest enterprises, the message from our customers is the same: Claude is increasingly becoming critical to how businesses work," said Anthropic CFO Krishna Rao. "This fundraising reflects the incredible demand we are seeing from these customers, and we will use this investment to continue building the enterprise-grade products and models they have come to depend on," he added.

The AI startup's run-rate revenue is $14 billion. The number of customers spending over $100,000 annually on Claude has grown 7x in the past year. "Two years ago, a dozen customers spent over $1 million with us on an annualised basis. Today, that number exceeds 500. Eight of the Fortune 10 are now Claude customers," the company said.

In January alone, the AI startup launched more than 30 products and features, including Cowork, which includes 11 open-source plugins. It also expanded its reach into healthcare and life-sciences.

"Since our initial investment in 2025, Anthropic's focus on agentic coding and enterprise-grade AI systems has accelerated its progress toward large-scale adoption," said Philippe Laffont, Founder and Portfolio Manager of Coatue. "The team's ability to rapidly scale its offerings further positions Anthropic as a leader in a highly-competitive AI market," he added.

Silver dips 5% to Rs 2.55 L/kg amid subdued demand

NEW DELHI, PTI: Precious metal prices declined more than 5% in the national capital on Friday, with silver declining to Rs 2.55 lakh per kg, while gold dropped to Rs 1.58 lakh per 10 grams amid subdued demand in the local market.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the white metal slumped Rs 13,500, or 5.03%, to Rs 2,55,000 per kg (inclusive of all taxes). It ended flat at Rs 2,68,500 per kg on Thursday.

Gold of 99.9% purity also dived Rs 2,400, or 1.5%, to Rs 1,58,500 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) from the previous close of Rs 1,60,900 per 10 grams.

"Gold and silver fell sharply on Friday amid a broader market sell-off and remained under pressure on Friday, as investors adopted a cautious stance ahead of the highly anticipated US consumer inflation data," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst, Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

In the international market, spot silver gained $2.01, or 3%, to $77.30 per ounce, while gold was trading nearly 1% higher at $4,968.40 per ounce. "Silver has rebounded to trade near $79 per ounce, while gold has also recovered to $4,990 per ounce as markets turn their focus to upcoming US CPI data," Kaynat Chainwala, AVP Commodity Research, Kotak Securities, said.

She added that softer inflation readings could revive expectations of policy easing and provide much-needed stability to bullion prices while persistent inflation and a resilient labour market could keep the Fed on a "higher-for-longer" trajectory, keeping prices under pressure.

Meanwhile, easing geopolitical tensions, particularly around Russia-Ukraine and renewed US-Iran nuclear discussions, have dampened safe-haven demand.

Puravankara posts Rs 58 cr profit in Q3

BENGALURU, DHNS: Puravankara Limited, a real estate developer, on Friday reported a Profit After Tax (PAT) of Rs 58.48 crore, compared to a loss of Rs 94 crore in Q3FY25, underscoring a sharp recovery driven by improved execution, project completions and operating discipline. This single quarter's performance has offset a large part of the cumulative losses recorded in the previous two quarters, primarily due to handover delays in H1FY26 arising from regulatory transitions, including e-Khata implementation and by-law changes, the company said in a statement.

Total revenue for Q3FY26 stood at Rs 1,104 crore, up 231% Year-on-Year.

Customer collections increased 22% YoY to Rs 1,140 crore, reflecting stronger cash conversion and improving operating efficiency. For 9MFY26, total project revenue stood at Rs 2,305 crore, up 51% YoY, while customer collections rose 8% YoY to Rs 3,045 crore. Operating cash inflows for the nine-month period stood at Rs 3,504 crore, up 9% YoY which resulted in Rs 755 crore cash operating surplus for 9M FY26.

Reliance secures US licence to import Venezuelan oil

NEW DELHI, PTI: Reliance Industries has received a US general licence to purchase Venezuelan crude oil directly, enabling India's largest private refiner to resume imports of discounted heavy feedstock that aligns with its Jamnagar refinery configuration and optimises refining margins.

Reliance, which operates the world's largest single-site refining complex in Jamnagar, was among international companies which in late January got the licence to buy oil directly without violating sanctions, sources said.

Since capturing Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro last month, the US has eased sanctions on the nation's energy industry to resume the flow of oil from the country that holds the world's largest reserves.

So far, the US has permitted the sale of Venezuelan oil through traders, but now a general licence will give authorisation to purchase of oil directly from an entity that has already extracted it from below ground or is in possession of it.

Reliance was a regular buyer of Venezuelan crude before the US slapped sanctions on Maduro's regime in 2019-20. It bought oil when the US introduced a temporary sanctions relief in 2024. And when Venezuelan oil started flowing again through traders this year, it bought 2 million barrels from Vitol.

The window was also utilised by state-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL), who have jointly bought 2 million barrels (1.5 million barrels for IOC's Paradip refinery in Odisha and rest 500,000 barrels for HPCL's Visakhapatnam unit).

Prior to sanctions, IOC was also a regular buyer of Venezuelan crude.

US President Donald Trump last week said PM Narendra Modi had agreed to stop buying Russian oil and purchase more oil from the US, and possibly Venezuela, following a key US trade deal with India. That agreement has led to the US dropping punitive 25% tariffs imposed on Indian goods for the import of Russian oil.

Sources said tapping Venezuela is also part of India's efforts to diversify its crude sources. This comes at a time when imports from Russia are set to fall.

Venezuela's crude grades, especially from the Orinoco Belt, are predominantly heavy and extra-heavy. Reliance's Jamnagar refineries are among those capable of processing heavy, sour crudes, which trade at a deep discount to international benchmarks due to production challenges and logistical constraints.

RBI fines Bank of M'rashtra, others

MUMBAI, PTI: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday imposed monetary penalties on Bank of Maharashtra, CSB Bank, DCB Bank and other firms for non-compliance with directions.

The RBI imposed Rs 32.50 lakh fine on Bank of Maharashtra, Rs 29.60 lakh on DCB Bank, Rs 63.60 lakh on CSB Bank, Rs 3.80 lakh on Navi Finserv, Rs 5.30 lakh fine on IIFL Finance, it stated.

The penalty on the Bank of Maharashtra was imposed, as the lender did not report Self-Help Group member-level data to credit information companies and did not identify beneficial owners in certain accounts.

CSB Bank was penalised as it entered into an arrangement with business correspondents for undertaking activities outside the scope of activities that can be undertaken by them, and levying charges in certain savings bank accounts without ensuring that customers were made aware of such charges upfront, the RBI said.

With DCB Bank, it was found that it failed to maintain the prescribed loan-to-value ratio in certain non-agricultural gold loan accounts.

PV dispatches rise in Jan amid robust demand: SIAM

NEW DELHI, PTI: Domestic passenger vehicle dispatches from companies to dealers rose 13% YoY to 4,49,616 units in January, with demand remaining robust owing to GST rate rationalisation and subsequent dip in prices, the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) said on Friday.

The overall passenger vehicle dispatches stood at 3,99,386 units in January 2025. The sales growth last month was aided by utility vehicles.

The segment wholesales increased to 2,46,844 units last month, compared with 2,12,995 units in the year-ago period, a growth of 16%.

Similarly, van sales rose to 11,914 units in January, as against 11,250 units in the same month, last year.

Passenger car dispatches, however, dipped 5% YoY to 1,20,636 units in January.

Maruti Suzuki led the segment in January with a dispatch of 1,74,529 units. It sold 1,73,599 units in the year-ago period.

Two-wheeler sales rose 26% to 19,25,603 units last month, as against 15,26,218 units in January last year, SIAM stated.

Scooter dispatches increased 37% year-on-year to 7,50,580 units, while motorcycle wholesales rose 20% year-on-year to 11,26,416 units in January.

"Passenger vehicles, two-wheelers and three-wheelers posted their highest-ever sales of January in 2026, with double-digit growth, compared to January 2025," SIAM Director General Rajesh Menon stated.

The new year has begun on a positive note, extending the momentum seen in the previous quarter, supported by demand following the GST rate reduction, he said.

The initiatives announced in the Union Budget 2026 to strengthen India's manufacturing base, along with existing policy tailwinds, are expected to deliver long-term benefits for the sector and support medium-term growth, Menon added.

SHIPPING LANES

India posts $31 bn trade deficit with FTA partners in Q2 of FY26

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

India registered a trade deficit of $31 billion in the second quarter of the current financial year with its FTA partner countries that include the UAE, Singapore, Australia, Japan and South Korea, as per a report released by NITI Aayog on Friday.

India's exports to its FTA partner countries in Q2 of 2025-26 stood at $38 billion, while imports from these nations rose to $69.8 billion, resulting in a trade deficit of $31 billion.

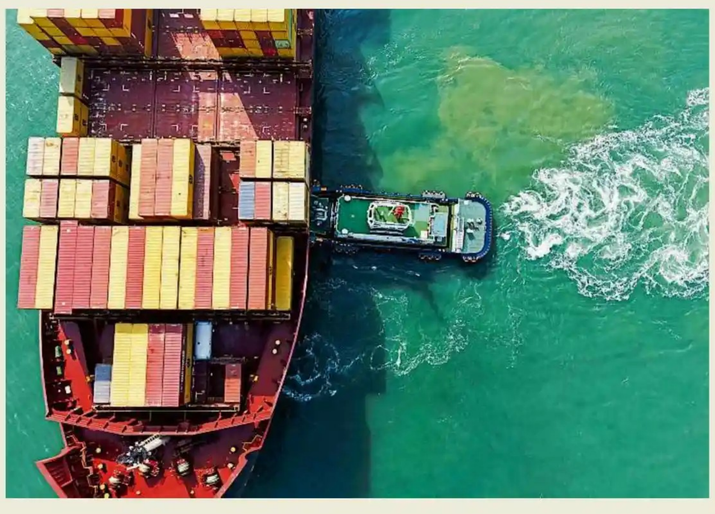
India's export shipments to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) dipped by 16.8% YoY during the quarter under review. It fell by 18.7% to Australia, 32.1% to Malaysia, 36.7% to Singapore and 51.8% to Mauritius.

Offsetting these declines, exports recorded growth to the UAE (10.5%), South Korea (14.7%), Thailand (16.1%), Sri Lanka (17.6%), and Japan (7.5%), as per data released by NITI Aayog in its sixth edition of 'Trade Watch Quarterly'.

Imports from FTA partners increased to $69.8 billion in the July-September 2025 quarter, from $66.8 billion recorded in the corresponding period of the previous year, driven by higher inflows from ASEAN (4.4%), SAFTA (82.2%), Singapore (6.7%), Malaysia (16.2%), Japan (13.0%), and Thailand (13.3%). Imports declined from Australia (-27.5%) and South Korea (-2.6%).

The PM Narendra Modi government has announced the conclusion of five trade deals in less than a year. It includes deals with the UK, the EU, Oman, New Zealand, and the US.

"Overall, India's FTAs remain resilient, with strong export gains in key markets and rising imports signaling deeper trade integration," NITI Aayog noted in the report.



India's total merchandise and services trade grew by 5.1% YoY during April-September 2025, reaching $895.1 billion. Exports rose faster than imports, supported by robust growth in services and select merchandise categories.

The thematic section of this quarter's edition focuses on India's electronics trade, examining global demand patterns, export footprint across mobile phones, consumer electronics, industrial electronics, and components, and participation in global electronics value chains.

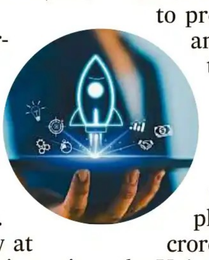
"Electronics, as the organising core of modern manufacturing value-chains, with semiconductors and components, plays a key role in determining trade balances and technological sovereignty," said NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Suman Bery.

"While India has achieved scale in final assembly, sustained competitiveness will depend on correcting structural cost disabilities, deepening domestic component ecosystems, and leveraging anchor investments in components to embed Indian firms more firmly within global production networks," Bery said.

The electronics segment represents a $4.6-trillion global market. India's share stands at around 1% for 2024. The country's electronics exports are concentrated in mobile phones, which make up 52.5% of the basket, while power equipment and wires contribute smaller shares. Imports are dominated by integrated circuits (23.7%), mobile phones (17.5%), and data-processing machines (10.6%).

Govt approves Startup India Fund of Funds 2.0 with Rs 10k cr corpus

NEW DELHI, PTI: The government on Friday approved the second tranche of Startup India Fund of Funds Scheme with a corpus of Rs 10,000 crore.



This will encourage startups in early stages and deep-tech research, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in a social media post.

On his first day at Seva Teerth, the prime minister's new office, Modi signed files that are connected with the empowerment of the poor, downtrodden, farmers, Yuva Shakti and Nari Shakti.

The key decisions include "approval for a Startup India Fund of Funds 2.0 with a corpus of Rs 10,000 crore," said the post.

The government in 2016 had constituted a Fund of Funds worth Rs 10,000 crore to provide seed capital and enable startups take calculated risks.

Following the successful utilisation of the first tranche, a second phase of Rs 10,000 crore was sanctioned in the Union Budget for 2025-26.

So far over 2 lakh entities are recognised as startups by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). These entities are eligible for incentives under the startup India action plan.

Democracy returns: The new PM will have to hit the ground running to deliver on promises

BNP returned to power after nearly two decades

Bangladesh general elections: Party-wise performance

2026 General Election
WINNER: **Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)**
Majority mark: 151 seats
Party-wise seats (2026)

299 Total Constituencies
209 Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)
68 Jamaat-e-Islami
National Citizen Party - **6**
Others - **16**
Voter turnout: 59%

2024 General Election
WINNER: **Awami League**
300 Total Constituencies
225 Bangladesh Awami League
It was boycotted by the main opposition, including Bangladesh Nationalist Party.

2018 General Election
WINNER: **Awami League-led Alliance**
Majority mark: 151 seats
Party-wise seats (2018)

300 Total Constituencies
257 Bangladesh Awami League
6 Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)
Jatiya Party - **22**
Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal - **2**
Workers Party of Bangladesh - **3**
Others - **10**

Members of the media look at documents of preliminary election results at the Election Commission office in Dhaka on Friday. AFP

Tarique Rahman rises to lead B'desh

SMITA SHARMA
DHAKA

Son of former prime minister Begum Khaleda Zia and former president Gen Ziaur Rahman, Tarique Rahman knows he has not inherited an easy crown. A businessman who lived in exile in the UK for 17 years, he returned to Bangladesh last year and kept his campaign positive and measured, avoiding inflammatory rhetoric even as public attention intensified.

On Friday, he chose not to speak before hordes of cameras that followed him to capture a glimpse of the country's new top leader, signalling a cautious and restrained approach as he steps into office.

Rahman will have to hit the ground running to deliver on promises of good governance, reducing inflation and price rises, and creating jobs for educated youth beyond the country's labour-intensive textile sector. He must also shape his foreign policy vision with neighbours, including India, as citizens hope for stable relations and the restoration of higher numbers of medical and business visas.

Regional leaders were quick to respond. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee congratulated "Tarique-Bhai" in a tweet, wishing him and the nation in advance, Ramzan Mubarak. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also sent an early congratulatory message and spoke to the prime minister-elect, underlining the importance of ties between Delhi and Dhaka.

Domestic political tensions remain. Sheikh Hasina, sentenced to death in absentia in November last year for crimes against humanity, continues to cast a shadow over relations between India and Bangladesh. BNP leaders, in initial remarks to local media, said they would seek her deportation from India.

For now, people on the streets hope Rahman will take Bangladesh to new heights, stabilise relations with its largest neighbour and restore the earlier higher numbers of Indian visas for medical treatment and business travel.

His oath-taking ceremony is likely within three days. Voters also backed a referendum stemming from the July Charter of 2024 that seeks constitutional reforms and political accountability, including term limits for prime ministers.

A third-generation leader, Rahman — in exile for 17 years before his return — will be tested in his political prowess to contain a rejuvenated Jamaat, manage the army that allowed a smooth transition of power, and meet aspirations of Gen Z voters who supported the country's political reset.

'Yes' triumphs in referendum with 60% votes

A referendum on the implementation of a reform package saw a 60.26% voter turnout in Bangladesh, with the 'yes' vote winning a clear majority, the Election Commission announced Friday, reports PTI.

The referendum had sought people's consent to the July National Charter 2025, which Muhammad Yunus announced on October 17.

Supporters of the BNP flash victory signs in front of a banner with Tarique Rahman's photo, as the results project party's victory in general election, in Dhaka, on Friday. REUTERS

After Gen Z uprising, Dhaka vote shows limits of youth power

DHAKA, REUTERS

In an election triggered by a Gen Z–led uprising in Bangladesh, a youth-driven party secured only six seats in the 300-member parliament, showing the challenge of turning street momentum into votes.

When it came to it, results showed on Friday that voters overwhelmingly chose the long-established Bangladesh Nationalist Party, which has already ruled the country three times, most recently from 2001-2006.

They largely stayed away from The National Citizen Party which emerged from the 2024 protests that toppled former premier Sheikh Hasina, but fared poorly as part of a rival coalition.

Many of its supporters said the NCP effectively took itself out of the race by choosing in December to run alongside another long-established movement - the Islamist party Jamaat-e-Islami.

The NCP had initially planned to contest nearly all seats, but ended up competing in only 30 in the coalition, Analysts said the NCP had also failed to build up a big enough support base in time for the vote.

"They did not live up to the hopes and dreams people had after the 2024 uprising," 23-year-old university student Sohanur Rahman said.

"The NCP's alignment with Jamaat felt like a betrayal, and many young voters like us chose not to support them."

One of the six NCP winners was Abdullah Al Amin, 32, a lawyer and joint secretary of the party.

He said the party had expected to win more seats and it only lost some by small margins.

"We have just started our journey," he said. "We want to ride a long journey to change Bangladesh, real change that we were aspiring for when we took to the streets in July 2024."

BNP thanks India for recognising poll verdict, seeks stronger ties

DHAKA, PTI: The BNP on Friday thanked India and Prime Minister Narendra Modi for recognising the verdict of Bangladesh's general elections and hoped that the relations between the two countries will be strengthened under the new government.

Speaking to PTI videos, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party's (BNP) standing committee member and chief coordinator for the 2026 election Nazrul Islam Khan said the party appreciated Modi's recognition of the people's verdict.

"We thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi for congratulating our leader, Tarique Rahman. It is great that a democratic country is supposed to recognise the verdict of the people, and Mr Narendra Modi has done this. We thank him," he said.

"We, also on behalf of our party, thank him, and we believe that under the leadership of our leader, Mr Tarique Rahman, the relation between these two countries and the people of these two countries will be strengthened," he added.

Earlier in the day, Modi extended warm congratulations to Rahman on leading the BNP to a decisive victory in Bangladesh's parliamentary elections.

In a post on X, the Indian Prime Minister said the result reflected the trust of the Bangladeshi people in Rahman's leadership.

Hindu leader wins from Dhaka

DHAKA, PTI: Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, a senior BNP leader from the minority Hindu community, won a Dhaka constituency on Friday in Bangladesh's 13th national parliamentary election.

Roy won the Dhaka-3 seat with 99,163 votes, defeating his nearest rival, Jamaat-e-Islami candidate Md Shahinur Islam, the state-run BSS news agency reported.

The former state minister's win from the Dhaka seat comes in the backdrop of alleged harassment of the minority Hindu community members in the country.

The community has faced a series of attacks, some fatal, after the killing of radical youth leader Sharif Osman Hadi in December.

India has been expressing concerns over attacks on minorities, especially Hindus, in Bangladesh.

Separately, the lone Hindu candidate fielded by the radical Islamist Jamaat-e-Islami party was defeated in the Khulna-1 constituency.

Krishna Nandi received 70,346 votes in the electoral contest, where BNP contender Amir Ejaz Khan secured 1,21,352 votes.

New round of talks between Russia, Ukraine next week

GENEVA, AP: Another round of US-brokered talks between envoys from Russia and Ukraine will take place next week in Geneva, days ahead of the fourth anniversary of the all-out Russian invasion of its neighbour, officials in Moscow and Kyiv said on Friday.

The meeting will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said in a statement carried by Russian news agencies.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's communications adviser, Dmytro Lytvyn, confirmed the new round of negotiations.

The talks take place against a backdrop of continued fighting along the roughly 1,250-kilometre front line, relentless Russian bombardment of civilian areas of Ukraine and the country's power grid, and Kyiv's almost daily long-range drone attacks on war-related assets on Russian soil.

Europe seeks new 'partnership' with US

Merz rallies officials at security conference under heavy pressure from Trump

MUNICH, AFP

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz shakes hands with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio during the Munich Security Conference in Munich, Germany, on Friday. REUTERS

German leader Friedrich Merz called on Friday for "a new transatlantic partnership" between the United States and Europe, as he rallied officials at a top security conference under heavy pressure from US President Donald Trump.

European leaders were striving to shore up relations with Washington, insisting they were strengthening their defences in line with Trump's demands at what Merz and others described as a time of "upheaval".

This year's Munich Security Conference comes at a time of strained ties between Europe and the United States, after Trump threatened to take over Greenland and criticised European countries' record on immigration.

Russia's war against Ukraine, set to enter its fifth year this month, will be high on the agenda, alongside efforts by European Nato members to raise their defence budgets out of concern that Moscow could seek to expand into their territory.

European leaders at the gathering defended their security commitments and the Nato alliance, with EU chief Ursula von der Leyen saying the bloc was "ready to take more responsibility for our own security" -- after Trump called it into question and accused allies of not spending enough on defence.

"Being a part of Nato is not only Europe's competitive advantage. It's also the United States' competitive advantage. So let's repair and revive transatlantic trust together," Merz said.

"In the era of great power rivalry, even the United States will not be powerful enough to go it alone."

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who arrived on Friday, is due to speak at the annual gathering on Saturday, as is Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, organisers said.

Rubio is seen as a more conciliatory choice of envoy, a year after Vice President JD Vance used the same stage to attack European policies on immigration and free speech, shocking European allies.

"Rubio will not gratuitously offend the Europeans," analyst Ian Bremmer of Eurasia Group told a news conference.

BLAST-OFF

SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket with the company's Dragon spacecraft on top launches from Space Launch Complex 40 for the Crew-12 mission at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida on Friday. AFP

Microsoft, Ericsson lead global tech alliance for digital trust

STOCKHOLM, REUTERS: A group of 15 companies, led by Microsoft and Ericsson, launched on Friday the "Trusted Tech Alliance," built around five principles to safely use technology regardless of where it is developed.

The initiative is the first concerted move by a group of global companies to address concerns about where data is stored as the increasingly isolationist United States, under U.S. President Donald Trump, has sharpened Europe's and Asia's focus on "digital sovereignty".

Governments have considered new regulations and domestic investment strategies to reduce digital dependence on the United States and other foreign suppliers.

Arundhati pulls out of Berlin Film Festival amid Gaza row

BERLIN, AFP: Award-winning Indian writer Arundhati Roy said Friday she was withdrawing from the Berlin Film Festival over jury president Wim Wenders's comments that he wanted to "stay out of politics" after being asked about Gaza.

Roy said in a statement that she was "shocked and disgusted" by Wenders' response to a question on Gaza at a press conference on Thursday. "With deep regret, I must say that I will not be attending the Berlinale," she said.

Roy, whose novel "Children of a Lesser God" won the 1997 Booker Prize, had been announced as a festival guest.

Indian man pleads guilty in 'plot' against Sikh separatist in US

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Nikhil Gupta, a businessman from India currently incarcerated in the United States, pleaded guilty on Friday to being involved with a plot to assassinate Khalistani Sikh terrorist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun in New York.

Gupta had been arrested in the Czech Republic in June 2023 and had been extradited to the US in June 2024. He had been accused by the US prosecutors of trying to hire a hitman to kill Pannun, a leader of the Sikhs for Justice, in New York, at the behest of Vikas Yadav, a former officer of the Research and Analytical Wing (RAW), the external intelligence agency of India.

The case has been an irritant in New Delhi's ties with Washington, D.C., during the last few months of Joe Biden's presidency in the US. It, however, resurfaced on Friday, for the first time after Donald Trump returned to the White House to succeed Joe Biden.

Sikh separatist leader Gurpatwant Singh Pannun.

Gupta, who has been incarcerated in a jail in Brooklyn since his transfer from a prison in Prague, appeared before Magistrate Judge Sarah Netburn of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York on Friday and pleaded guilty to all three charges against him.

New Delhi is studying the legal implications of his guilty plea, but sources told *DH* that the Government of India had nothing to do with it.

US sending second aircraft carrier group to Middle East

WASHINGTON, AP

The world's largest aircraft carrier has been ordered to sail from the Caribbean Sea to the Middle East, a person familiar with the plans said Thursday, as US President Donald Trump considers whether to take possible military action against Iran.

The move by the USS Gerald R. Ford, first reported by The New York Times, will put two carriers and their accompanying warships in the region as Trump increases pressure on Iran to make a deal over its nuclear programme. The person spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss military movements.

The USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier and three guided-missile destroyers arrived in the Middle East more than two weeks ago.

It marks a quick turnaround for the USS Ford, which Trump sent from the Mediterranean Sea to the Caribbean last October as the administration build up a huge military presence in the leadup to the surprise raid last month that captured then-Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro.

It also appears to be at odds with Trump's national security strategy, which put an emphasis on the Western Hemisphere over other parts of the world. Trump told Axios earlier in the week that he was considering sending a second carrier strike group to the Middle East.

The USS Ford set out on deployment in late June 2025, which means the crew will have been deployed for eight months in two weeks time. While it is unclear how long the ship will remain in the Middle East, the move sets the crew up for an usually long deployment.

Trump says will visit Venezuela, doesn't say when

President Donald Trump said Friday that he would visit Venezuela -- whose leader was toppled last month in a US military raid -- but had not yet determined when, reports AFP. "I'm going to make a visit to Venezuela," he said when asked about a potential trip by reporters at the White House, adding: "we haven't decided" on a date.

UNSC notes JeM's reported link to Red Fort attack

UNITED NATIONS, PTI

A report by the UN Security Council sanctions monitoring team has noted that Pakistan-based terror group Jaish-e-Mohammed was reported to be linked to a terror attack on the Red Fort in New Delhi last November that killed 15 people.

"One Member State noted that Jaish-i-Mohammed had claimed responsibility for series of attacks. It was also reported to be linked to an attack on the Red Fort in New Delhi on November 9 that killed 15 people," the 37th report of Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted to the Security Council 1267 Sanctions Committee concerning ISIL and Al-Qaida said.

The report, issued here, added that on October 8, JeM leader Mohammed Masood Azhar Alvi "formally announced the establishment of a women-only wing, Jamaat ul-Muminat, which was aimed at supporting terrorist attacks."

Even as another member state reported that Jaish-e-Mohammed was defunct, the report added that "Separately, it was reported that on July 28, three individuals allegedly involved in the attack perpetrated in Pahalgam, in Jammu and Kashmir, were killed."

At his weekly briefing in New Delhi on Thursday, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal was asked for a comment on the UNSC report.

"This particular report that you refer to, it is available in the public domain. It is online. This was the 37th Report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team. This was published on February 4, 2026," he said.

A BASKET full of LOVE

Rachna Chhabria shares a heartwarming tale about friendship, kindness, and the joy of giving

Bear opened her eyes and stared around the cave. The ice had melted. Even the water had evaporated. Stretching her limbs, Bear slowly ambled towards the cave's entrance. The world outside the cave was a riot of colourful flowers, announcing the arrival of spring. Though she had missed her friends, the long winter hibernation had done Bear a world of good. She was ready to tackle everything life threw at her.

Bear walked towards her house, trampling the soft grass moist with early morning dew. The gentle sun smiled at her. Removing the key from under a pot, she opened the door; she was surprised to see the house clean and tidy, smelling of baked goods and fresh flowers.

Bear smiled, seeing the colourful notes stuck all over the house. 'Welcome home, Bear.' 'Enjoy the pie.' 'There is a book for you.' 'Fresh flowers to brighten your day.' 'Water for you.' 'Hot tea to start your morning.' Her friends were so kind; everyone had contributed something. Wolf had cleaned the house. Fox had washed the curtains and the bedsheet. Deer had dusted the bookshelf. Zebra had made tea. Hippopotamus had baked a pie. Monkey had brought a basket brimming with fruit. Elephant had filled the drum with fresh spring water. Squirrel had left a bowl of nuts. The bees had placed a pot of honey.

The butterflies had decorated the house with fresh flowers.

Sipping tea and eating a slice of apple pie, Bear sighed with contentment. Life without her friends was nothing. They loved her unconditionally, and it showed in their actions. She loved them to the moon and back. Bear realised that because of her long sleep, she had missed her favourite day of the year, 14th February, which was her birthday and also Valentine's Day. Though it would be belated, she wanted to celebrate it uniquely.

Bear spent the morning rummaging through her belongings. Humming a tune, she baked, weaved, stitched, and painted.

"Love is round and round, it has no shape and makes no sound, it never ends, it only sends, it is here, there, and everywhere," Bear sang as she went about her chores. She plucked grass and flowers, and gathered seeds, bird feathers, and pine cones.

She rummaged through all the different objects she had collected over the years. "They all can be put to good use," she said. Her eyes brightened as ideas popped into her head.

She made a hairband by sticking different quills. She turned the claws of a wolf into two hair clips, painting them a bright blue. She made buttons from dried seeds, painting them in green and red, adding a stripe of gold. She made two plates from the discarded shell of a tortoise and coloured them brown and silver. She baked a dozen cupcakes and decorated them with honey and cherries. She made hats from the grass that grew in abundance around her house. She wove colourful flowers into necklaces and made tiaras from her collection of different bird feathers.

Filling a basket with all the goodies, she placed it under the tallest tree near her house, with the poster she had made: 'Happy Belated Valentine's Day from Bear. Take some love, leave some love.'

Returning home, she sat on a chair near her window and watched.

The animals walked past, stopped at the tree, read the poster, glanced at the goodies, and walked past.

Bear's face fell.

In a few minutes...

"These hair clips are lovely, I'll wear them to school tomorrow." Monkey took the hair clips and left a pair of belts she had made from long leaves.

"It's ages since I have eaten a cupcake." Squirrel took a cake and left a pouch of nuts.

"I need a hat to protect me from the sun." Giraffe wore one of the straw hats and dropped a mango and a guava into the basket.

"I'm going to meet my friends; this garland will make me look cool." Fox picked up a garland and replaced it with a handkerchief she had made from flower petals.

Bear laughed as Hippopotamus wore the hairband and placed a handful of peacock feathers. Mouse devoured a cupcake and replaced it with pine needles.

"I need buttons for the jacket my mother is making for me." Deer took six buttons and kept an antler inside the basket.

"Ahh, the perfect plate for my meals." Wolf admired the plate made from a tortoise shell. He held it close to his cheek. Then he rushed home with it.

Bear frowned. "Wolf took some love but left no love behind?"

Wolf returned an hour later, carrying a pot of soup. He placed the soup beside the basket and covered it with a large leaf. "That's so thoughtful of him," Bear blew a kiss at Wolf.

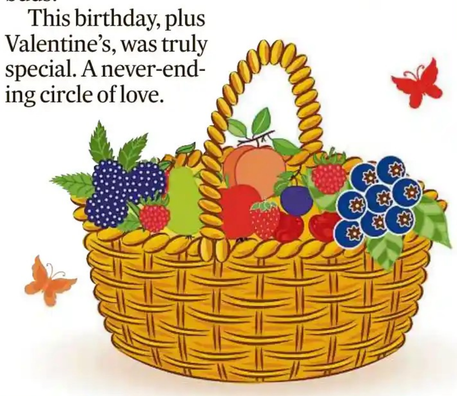
"I have such a bad cold." Zebra gulped the soup and burped, and then he walked away.

An hour passed, then another hour. "How can Zebra break the circle of love?" Bear grumbled.

Soon, Zebra returned. He had made many accessories with leaves and flowers.

The bear smiled and walked towards the tree, lifting a bracelet made from flower buds.

This birthday, plus Valentine's, was truly special. A never-ending circle of love.



3 DIY crafts using popsicle sticks

...and other common stationery

Box with lid

Materials needed

- Popsicle sticks: 60-80
- Glue or hot glue gun
- Acrylic paint or poster colours
- Thick paper or cardboard
- Ribbon, beads, or stickers (optional)

Method

1) To make this project, you will need coloured sticks. Use paint to colour them accordingly.
2) To make the base, lay down 8-10 sticks side by side.
3) Glue two sticks across them horizontally at the end to hold them together.
4) To build the sides, glue 4 sticks to form a square frame.
5) Stack more layers on top and stick them together, alternating the direction each time.
6) Continue until the box reaches your desired height. Let it dry.
7) To make the lid, repeat steps 2 and 3. Glue 4 sticks on the edges, on both sides, so that the lid sits neatly on the box.
8) If you want to decorate the box, use ribbons or beads.

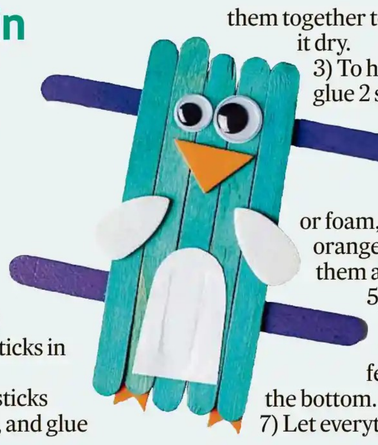
Stick penguin

Materials needed

- Popsicle sticks: 9-10
- Paper or foam sheet (white and orange)
- Googly eyes
- Glue
- Scissors

Method

1) To make the penguin's body, paint around 6-7 popsicle sticks in teal or blue.
2) Line up the popsicle sticks vertically side by side, and glue them together to form a flat panel. Let it dry.
3) To hold the panel together, glue 2 sticks horizontally across the back.
4) Cut out the wings and belly out of white paper or foam, and a beak out of orange paper or foam. Stick them accordingly.
5) Stick on googly eyes.
6) Cut out two orange pieces in the shape of feet, and glue them at the bottom.
7) Let everything dry fully.



Desk organiser

Materials needed

- Popsicle sticks: 30-50
- Acrylic paint or poster colours
- Empty cardboard tubes (toilet paper or tissue rolls): 3
- Thick cardboard
- Glue or hot glue gun
- Ribbon or paper strips
- Scissors
- Paint, glitter, stickers (optional)

Method

1) Cut cardboard tubes or rolls to the desired heights. You can make different heights for variety.
2) Use paint or poster colours to colour the popsicle sticks. Glue the sticks vertically around each tube. Place them close together so the tube is hidden.
3) Cut a cardboard circle and glue it to the base of each tube.
4) To make the base, glue several popsicle sticks side by side to form a flat rectangle.
5) Wrap ribbon or paper around the bottom of the tubes and in the middle. Add stickers or glitter for a fun look.
6) Glue the decorated tubes onto the base. Arrange the big and small ones together.
7) Let it dry. Once dry, it can hold pens, markers, and other stationery.

Word of the Week
quibble
(noun)
— objection or criticism about a trivial matter.
Usage:
— Sneha didn't quibble over the price because she wanted the book.
— The lawyer quibbled over the wording of the contract.

When love blooms...

Open Sesame readers share their art

On January 31, *Open Sesame* asked its young readers to send in their artworks. Soon, we were flooded with entries from across the country. Many paintings were good, but we can only publish a few because of space constraints.

Don't let that discourage you. Get creative and keep writing and painting, and stand a chance to be featured in an upcoming edition! Send your entries to: *opensesame@deccanherald.co.in*

AARUSHI SIVARAMAN, 14
Bengaluru, Karnataka

SHREYAS S MOURYAA, 13
Mangaluru, Karnataka

KUSHAL GOWDA N, 11
Bengaluru, Karnataka

AARAV V NAMBIAR, 14
Bengaluru, Karnataka

SAACHI SHASTRY, 11
Bengaluru, Karnataka

This Week:

About Akashvani

Take the fun Open Sesame quiz, and stand a chance to win gift vouchers worth Rs 500. Open to children below 16 years.

Q1 World Radio Day has been observed on February 13 since 2012. What was All India Radio, which was later renamed Akashvani, known as between April 1, 1930, and June 8, 1936?

Q2 Which Indian radio service, presenting a mix of film music, short plays and interactive programmes, was launched in October, 1957, to compete with the popularity of Radio Ceylon?

Q3 Akashvani and Doordarshan are the two divisions of India's state-owned public broadcaster, which has its headquarters in New Delhi. What is the name of that statutory autonomous body?

Scan the QR code
Or visit bit.ly/DHopensesame to participate in the quiz.

Q4 **Rhyme Time:** Two clues to which the answers rhyme with each other.
Clue A: Akashvani is Sanskrit for 'voice from the__.'
Clue B: Timid in the company of others.

Q5 **Clue Cluster:** Which language did Saeeda Bano, the first female newsreader of All India Radio, read the news in?
Use these clues.
a) Gulzar
b) Pakistan
c) Indo-Aryan
d) Army

WINNER'S NAMES: Madhu Tapasya (16), Gajendragad; Liz Maria Boby (11), Belthangady; Ritul Chindak (14), Banahatti.
ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S QUIZ: A1) Rabindra Setu, A2) Paris, A3) Gustav III, A4) Pisa/Visa, A5) Nelson Mandela.

LET'S DEBATE!

Want to take part in the upcoming *Open Sesame* debate? Share your thoughts in a crisp 200-word essay on the topic 'Should exams be replaced with project-based assessments?'. Mail your works to *opensesame@deccanherald.co.in*. Entries close on February 19. Open to children below 16 years. Don't forget to mention your name, age, school, and city. And send us a recent photograph.

LETTER WRITING

Write an open letter to your favourite game

If you could have a conversation with your favourite video or mobile game, what would you like to know from it, and what would you tell it about you? Write an open letter and share it with us. You stand a chance of being featured in an upcoming edition. Mail your work *to opensesame@deccanherald.co.in*. Open to children below 16 years. Don't forget to mention your name, age, and city, and send us a recent photograph. Entries close on February 26.

Getting there

Nearest airport – Jolly Grant Airport, Dehradun (250 km)

Nearest major city – Dehradun (200 km)

Nearest raiway stations – Rishikesh (200-250 km), Dehradun (175-200 km)

A 5 km patch of road on the way to Gangotri is fully covered in snow after snowfall, prompting government agencies to deploy snow cutters to make it motorable again.

When an entire town chills

Gangotri, the pilgrimage town in Uttarakhand that draws millions of devotees in summer, turns into a frozen ghost town come winter. Raju Gusain, who has made multiple visits to the region, paints a picture of life in the Bhagirathi valley

A typical summer day in Gangotri is defined by crowds — pilgrims rushing towards the Gangotri temple, taking a holy dip in the Bhagirathi river, and heading towards the hotels or the bus stand. The small pilgrimage town remains packed with devotees from far and wide.

However, winter tells a completely different story. The roads fall silent, the temple premises appear almost deserted, and vehicular movement becomes rare. Gangotri, once bustling with life, transforms into a quiet and frozen world, which is often harsh.

Gangotri is one of the most important Hindu pilgrimage centres in Uttarakhand. Located on the banks of the Bhagirathi — the river considered the origin of the Ganga — the valley's charm was famously captured on screen by legendary filmmaker Raj Kapoor in his super hit film 'Ram Teri Ganga Maili'. However, even he missed the chance to portray Gangotri's winter beauty, as the shooting was completed in summer.

During winters, the population of Gangotri (Uttarkashi district) drops to fewer than 50 people. In the summer of 2025, it welcomed 8.5 lakh pilgrims. So, who stays behind? Government staff for security and patrolling, temple committee staff to safeguard the premises, forest personnel, and a few spiritual seekers or babas who come in search of solitude and meditation.

The priests of Gangotri migrate to Mukhwa and other nearby areas of Uttarkashi. Hotel and restaurant owners shut down their establishments and return to their villages. Porters, many of whom are from Nepal, go back to their country.

This winter, Gangotri has witnessed snowfall three times — a heavy spell on January 23 and light spells on January 27 and February 2. With harsh cold prevailing from mid-December to the end of February, daily life becomes extremely difficult. Locals claim that climate change has altered the snowfall pattern in the valley. Earlier, snowfall would begin in October. Now it often arrives in January, and sometimes even as late as April. Their observations raise serious questions, and scientific studies should examine the long-term impact of climate change in Gangotri.

Glaciologist D P Dobhal says, "Earlier, Gangotri used to receive one to two spells of snowfall in October, followed by heavy spells in November and December. One or two spells of snowfall would also occur in January. Now, we are experiencing late snowfall. Even the frequency of snowfall has declined." Dobhal is an acclaimed glaciologist and has recently retired from the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (Dehradun).

These days, the minimum temperature frequently drops below minus 15 degrees Celsius, while on clear, sunny days, the maximum may touch 20 degrees Celsius. Bright sunshine blesses the valley from around 10 am to 3 pm, but as evening approaches, cold weather tightens its grip. Suresh Semwal, secretary of the Gangotri Temple Committee, says, "We make elaborate arrangements for our staff's stay in winter at Gangotri. Rations, logistics — everything is in place. We store additional supplies to provide free food and tea to occasional devotees who visit the temple during winter. We also go to the temple for routine monitoring."

As winter arrives, the portals of the Gangotri temple are closed, and they remain closed for six months. Mukhwa village becomes the winter seat of Mother Ganga. Every year, the idol of Goddess Ganga is ceremonially shifted from Gangotri to the Mukhwa temple, about 25 km away, where daily prayers continue. Mukhwa gained national attention in 2025 when Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the village to offer prayers.

The Uttarakhand government has been promoting winter pilgrimage to make the Char Dham circuit a year-round destination. The winter seats of Badrinath (Joshimath), Kedarnath (Ukhimath), Gangotri (Mukhwa), and Yamunotri (Kharsali) are being actively promoted. As a result, awareness about Mukhwa has grown, and 100-200 devotees now visit daily during winter. Earlier, the footfall in Mukhwa was minimal.

Bharal spotting

After snowfall, Gangotri resembles a fairy-tale. Snow-covered mountains cast a magical spell over the valley. Yet, with beauty comes hardship. Temperatures drop sharply, water pipelines freeze, and residents are forced to fetch water directly from the Bhagirathi river. The river water, flowing down from glaciers, is icy cold. Old-timer Pratap Panwar admits, "You need a lot of courage even to touch the chilled water of the majestically flowing Bhagirathi. Forget about mustering the courage to take a dip in it."

Winter also brings rare opportunities to spot wildlife. A few birds remain in the snowbound Gangotri. Occasional sightings of the Himalayan monal are reported. However, pigeons and crows are commonly seen in large numbers near human settlements, providing some lively company to the silent town.

With water sources frozen or buried under snow, wild animals like the Himalayan blue sheep (bharal) come closer to the temple area in search of water. Forester Rajbeer Rawat says, "We occasionally see snow leopards and brown bears from a long distance. But the Himalayan blue sheep are human-friendly and can come as close as 10 metres."

(Top) The Gangotri temple, covered in snow, is closed during the winter months. (Above) The temple drew over 8 lakh pilgrims in summer 2025. PICS: PTI

Walking through snow

Gangotri is largely a commercial town with hotels and shops. Residences are few. Those employed in the local businesses are from nearby villages, and head back home at the end of the pilgrim season.

Houses are fitted with 'bukharis' (traditional room heaters), but the biggest struggle is drinking water. Even water stored in buckets and pitchers turns into ice. Water must be heated for every use — whether drinking, washing, or cooking. In many snowbound areas, the concept of installing insulated water tanks is common. But, in Gangotri, plastic tanks are used to store water, which is done well before the start of winter season. Water is transported through buckets from the tank.

After snowfall, Gangotri often remains cut off from the outside world. If one must travel, the only option is to walk through snow-covered roads. It is exhausting, risky, and lonely. A government staffer said, "Recently I had to go to Dehradun from Gangotri. The roads were covered with snow. I started walking at 12 noon and arrived near Harsil by 5 pm. It was a 25 km walk, 6 km of which was through snow."

Even on normal winter days, residents walk up to Bhaironghati (around 8 km) to find a vehicle belonging to the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), public works department, forest department, or army to reach Dharali, the nearest inhabited village. Whenever a vehicle unexpectedly arrives in Gangotri, people are tempted to quickly plan a trip to Dharali, Harsil, or Uttarkashi.

Public transport, mainly jeeps and buses, operate only during the pilgrimage season.

In the event of a health emergency, a patient is moved out of Gangotri via jeep, lorry, ambulance or helicopter. The nearest village is about 23 km away. As the snow typically covers a 5 km patch, it is not an insurmountable challenge. Often, army personnel and police officers offer their assistance.

Adventure seekers

Gangotri occasionally receives surprise visitors — adventure bikers. Negotiating slippery snow-covered roads, they experience the valley like an 'Alice in Wonderland' dream. Tilak Soni, owner of a tour company, says, "I have been conducting Gangotri winter bike expeditions since 2008. This time, I was unable to conduct one due to late snowfall, but I still plan to do it in the coming weeks. Bikers come to explore the hidden beauty of Gangotri and test their skills. Many use snow straps or chains on the wheels to maintain grip."

Soni explains, "The bike skids on snow and tests the driving skills of the biker. Bikers enjoy the challenge. The snow usually covers a 5 km patch of road, so that stretch is where bikers have to be extra careful. We also train bikers to control bikes without snow straps and chains."

Although Gangotri is connected by a motorable road, once the pilgrimage season ends, vehicle movement becomes extremely limited. Beyond Dharali, only vehicles of the army, temple committee, forest department, and district administration are seen. The BRO ensures the Uttarkashi-Gangotri highway remains functional throughout the year. Snow cutters are deployed to remove the snow and make the road functional.

Life in sub-zero temperatures becomes even harder due to frequent power cuts during storms and snowfall. When electricity fails, mobile connectivity is also disrupted. Although the BRO clears snow and restores road connectivity, the lack of traffic means travel depends heavily on luck. Most government departments follow a rotation system. For instance, staff of the Gangotri National Park are deployed for 10-day shifts, after which a new team replaces them. This continues until summer arrives and conditions become favourable. During the peak pilgrimage season, forest staff are deployed for longer periods.

A time to rest

After the hectic pilgrimage season, priests shift to Mukhwa or areas near Uttarkashi. During the summer months, they remain busy day and night, performing rituals and handling devotees. "There is a vast difference between staying in Gangotri for a few days and staying in Gangotri for six months without break. There is huge fluctuation in temperature. After bright sunshine, the night temperature drops to sub-zero. During the winter break, many priests travel to devotees' homes across India to conduct prayers and rituals. They also present Ganga water to devotees," says Rajnikant Semwal, a priest. The winter break also gives priests time to rest and prepare for the next season.

At the start of winter, hotel employees and shopkeepers also leave. Gangotri has around 150 hotels, lodges, restaurants, dhabas, ashrams, dharamshalas, and commercial establishments. Balam Dass, a resident of Harsil, explains, "As summer approaches, hotel owners go to Gangotri for renovation or repairs. During the pilgrimage season they don't get time, so winter is used for this work." By mid-March, activity slowly begins again as operators return for repair work and prepare for the new season. The Gangotri temple generally reopens in April or May. This year, it will reopen on April 19.

Back in 1815

Over the years, Gangotri has grown many folds, with numerous hotels and commercial establishments coming up. When Scottish travel writer and artist James Baillie Fraser visited Gangotri in 1815, he noted very limited infrastructure. In his book 'Journal of a Tour Through Part of the Snowy Range of the Himala Mountains', he wrote, "The whole is surrounded by a wall built of unhewn stone and lime, and the space this contains is paved with flat stones. In this space too there is a comfortable but small house for the residence of the Brahmins who come to officiate. Without the enclosure there are two or three sheds constructed of wood, called Dhurmsallahs, built for the accommodation of pilgrims who resort here; and there are many caves around formed by overhanging stones, which yield a shelter to those who cannot find accommodation in the sheds."

Fraser was the first ever European to reach Gangotri. Even today, some babas stay in caves around Gangotri, while others stay in ashrams and dharamshalas. Surya Prakash, a temple committee member who stays in Gangotri throughout the year, says, "In winter, complete silence exists and provides the perfect atmosphere for long meditation. During the day, when the sun is bright, babas and others gather near the temple and play carrom board. It is the biggest social event in Gangotri during winter. Cricket is not possible because of snow, and gathering enough players in such cold weather is nearly impossible."

Gangotri in winter is silent, harsh, and unforgiving — but at the same time, it is magical. It offers a rare glimpse into a life that survives at sub-zero temperatures, where nature dominates, and the human presence feels small, fragile, yet determined.

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MUSICANA

Duo blending underground R&B and hip-hop

Ranjani Ramadoss and Chlipher Christopher use their diverse interests to craft unconventional music, writes Shraddha A K

What began as informal jam sessions during the pandemic has evolved into a promising R&B and hip-hop act. Ranjani Ramadoss and Chlipher Christopher — RanjxClifr — have released one album, two EPs, and 11 singles, and are best known for tracks such as '2 good' and '8oz. of pussy juice'.

Both artistes have been immersed in music since childhood. Ranjani hails from Chennai and has trained extensively in Karnatik music. Christopher grew up across Kanyakumari, Himachal Pradesh, and Bengaluru. He spent his early years exploring multiple instruments and genres such as rock, metal, and gospel through church performances.

Their paths crossed at a college in Bengaluru, where they were both studying music. Ranjani was a year senior, but their shared musical interests led to collaboration during the pandemic lockdown. "There wasn't really a conversation about becoming a duo. It just happened," Ranjani shares. They are now based in Mumbai.

Ranjani says their work is rooted in mood and emotional depth. Christopher focuses on sonic architecture, taking charge of production, sound selection, and arrangement, while Ranjani shapes the narrative and feeling behind their music. "I bring the sonic, she brings the meaning," Christopher explains.

Their influences span genres and generations. Ranjani, 27, draws inspiration from artistes she describes as "rebellious", including A R Rahman, Destiny's Child, and Missy Elliott, along with early 2000s R&B. Christopher, 26, cites Joe Satriani, Pharrell Williams, Kanye West, and Ilaiyaraaja as major influences. He says he gravitates towards music that doesn't fit easily into a single category.

Their music catalogue continues to grow, as does their presence on stage, yet they believe they are just getting started. Their music is constantly evolving. Early tracks such as 'Come through' and 'Schoolbus' leaned towards feel-good, hummable sounds that offered relief amid the uncertainty of the pandemic. Now, their work has become more introspective, as evidenced in their latest single 'Who you are'. Visual storytelling has also become central to their projects and they collaborate with different visual artistes for each release.

Like most creative partnerships, disagreements are inevitable. The duo navigates them by stepping away from a track and returning with a new perspective. That clarity has often led to stronger creative decisions.

They say 2026 is shaping up to be a busy year. Ranjani is set to release her mixtape '27 Club', a 24-track project executive-produced by Christopher. As a duo, they are performing at the Magnetic Fields festival in Rajasthan this weekend, followed by gigs in Bengaluru and Mumbai.

The duo has released one album, two EPs, and 11 singles so far.

Haunting images: Cinema of Park Chan-wook

Cinephiles are upset about the Korean filmmaker's recent work 'No Other Choice' missing an Oscar nomination. Pushkar V looks at the master's craft

The camera sways with the protagonist as he swings a hammer, with vengeance in his heart, at the thugs attacking him through a narrow corridor. The entire sequence unfolds in one unbroken shot. This sequence from 'Oldboy' is a masterclass that inspired filmmakers worldwide, cementing Park Chan-wook's work as revolutionary in the genre.

In 'Lady Vengeance', Lee Geum-ja stares down her betrayer in a snowed yard, with red eyeshadow, carving vengeance under grey skies. 'Decision to Leave' gives us detective Hae-joon, portrayed as a stable mountain chasing an obsession that blurs reality. These hyper-stylised frames define Park's genius.

His latest film, 'No Other Choice', carries that same tension. It was South Korea's official submission for the 2026 Academy Awards and even made it to the shortlist. However, it walked away with no nominations. The result felt familiar. None of Park's films, not even the globally adored 'Oldboy', have ever earned an Oscar nomination. For a director whose work is studied, and praised worldwide, the silence from Hollywood feels loud.

'No Other Choice' arrives late in Park's career but does not feel tired. The film is shaped by his usual precision, sharp framing, controlled camera moves and a mood that hangs heavy in every room. The story, without giving anything away, looks at work, dignity and what happens when modern systems quietly crush people.

Park Chan-wook

Park's style has always been about control. He is known for detailed storyboards, sometimes sketching every shot, he once shared in an interview. This method gives his films a clockwork feel. In 'Decision to Leave', the camera glides, matching the emotional distance between the characters. Love becomes a visual idea, seen in reflections, and carefully timed silences in wide frames.

In 'The Handmaiden', Park's visual detail creates a sense of seduction. Every curtain, lamp and hallway is placed to mislead the viewer. The film's layered non-linear storytelling mirrors its visual design — elegant on the surface, dangerous underneath.

Earlier, in 'Lady Vengeance', Park sharpened his obsession with moral gaze. He uses red and white as contrasting symbols. Violence is framed, paused, slowed and questioned up close. He does not treat brutality as a spectacle and makes you watch even when you don't want to. That uneasy demand to watch runs through 'Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance' and 'Oldboy', together forming an unofficial 'Vengeance Trilogy'.

This visual discipline reaches a new clarity in 'No Other Choice'. The film feels colder, more modern as offices and homes are built to emotions. The blunt violence of earlier films is dialled down. Park's style is characterised by still shots, letting characters move within the frame. When the camera does move, it means something is coming. The silence between the cuts say more than dialogue.

Despite his mastery, the Oscars continue to look elsewhere. Park's films have premiered at major international film festivals, won prestigious prizes and earned lifelong admirers. Yet the Academy keeps missing his work, year after year.

This raises larger questions about the Oscars themselves: are they still truly a benchmark for global cinema, or mostly a mirror of American taste and politics?

South Korean cinema's global rise makes this tension clearer. Park's influence runs alongside that of his contemporary Bong Joon-ho, whose 'Parasite' famously won Best Picture. Bong's films blend genre and accessibility whereas Park, by contrast leans into discomfort, revenge, bold scenes and moral ambiguity. Together, they show two powerful paths Korean cinema has taken to reach the world.

Their success has shaped South Korea's filmscape, not just as a niche market but as a place producing bold, technically sharp and emotionally complex films. Young Korean filmmakers borrow Park's attention to detail and Bong's genre confidence. International directors borrow from both. This influence is real, even if trophies are not.

So is the Oscar important at all? For careers, funding and visibility, yes. For judging artistic value, only partly. Park Chan-wook's cinema stands solid even without that gold statuette. His films still disturb, seduce and thrill.

Awards come and go, but his images refuse to leave. Whether it is Dae-su biting into a live octopus in 'Oldboy' as its tentacles twist against his face, Lady Hideko and Sook-hee locked in an intimate embrace in 'The Handmaiden', or Man-su straining under the weight of a red pepper pot as water spills over his face in 'No Other Choice'.

The bitter irony lies in 'Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance', where a character stands on the road protesting, 'drive out American products', a line aimed at capitalism and cultural dominance. As global cinema grows louder and more diverse, one question lingers, will the Oscars evolve into a true reflection of that world, or slowly fade into a local prize with a very loud microphone?

'Oldboy' (2003) is regarded as one of the greatest films of all time.

Park's latest film 'No Other Choice' premiered at the Venice International Film Festival, 2025.

The zany MAESTRO

Hamsalekha, who just received the BIFFes lifetime achievement award, energised Kannada film songs with his irreverence and swag, writes S R Ramakrishna

Hamsalekha, honoured with a lifetime achievement award at the just concluded Bengaluru International Film Festival, brought the brash exuberance of street art to Kannada film songs.

Before his arrival as a full-fledged lyricist, Chi Udayashankar dominated the industry. Long associated with Rajkumar productions, Udayashankar had written the biggest hits in Kannada cinema. He had an easy style–he skipped words with heavy stress and his phrases fell pleasantly on the ear (naanu neenu/haalu jenu), he drew ideas from the best of Kannada poetry ('Maamaravello kogileyello' echoed an Akka Mahadevi vachana), and listeners could effortlessly recall his lines.

Hamsalekha, who not only wrote lyrics but also made tunes for them, broke away from that tradition. His songs for 'Premaloka' (1987) defied all song-writing conventions popular in Kannada cinema till then. The heroine was introduced with 'Hello my lovely lady,' a witty campus song that doffed its hat at Kalidasa's Sakuntalam. It broke away from the gently formal tone of earlier film songs, and celebrated a youthful, irreverent style. Hamsalekha was unapologetic about his quirky rhymes (Gangoo/baiku kalisikodu nangoo), risque innuendos and eccentric metaphors (nimbehanninatha hudugi — girl like a lemon). Lahari Velu, whose label Lahari Music had acquired audio rights, says 'Premaloka' sold a mindboggling 36 lakh cassettes, becoming the highest selling album for all of India that season. Many of the legendary Kannada film music composers were active when Hamsalekha made his debut, but with one hit, he had carved out a niche that was uniquely his own.

Hamsalekha's long collaboration with Ravichandran began with 'Premaloka' (1987), a musical blockbuster.

'Premaloka' was intended as a launch pad for V Ravichandran, whose father N Veeraswamy had produced big hits like Rajkumar's 'Naa Ninna Mareyalaare' (1976) and Vishnuvardhan's 'Naagarahaavu' (1972). Inspired by the Hollywood musical 'Grease 2', 'Premaloka', with 12 numbers, didn't care much for a storyline — all it wanted was to get its characters to sing and dance. The songs caught on like wildfire the moment they appeared on Doordarshan. Not only were they a feast for the eyes, but they were also fun to listen to. Word of mouth had turned the tide in favour of Ravichandran, the hero of the film who had also directed it.

'Premaloka' catapulted both Ravichandran and Hamsalekha to stardom. Their partnership continued for two decades, and they delivered blockbusters such as 'Ranadheera' (1988), Anjada Gandu (1988), and 'Ramachari' (1991). The super ambitious 'Shanti Kranti' (1991) flopped. All through the '90s, their songs played on the radio, and their albums were eagerly anticipated. The two drifted away eventually, with Ravichandran making his own music. Lahari released an unprecedented 221 film albums, all with one songwriter and composer–Hamsalekha.

Four decades on, Hamsalekha is credited with writing and making tunes for about 3,500 songs, and they include many sentimental numbers. As he ruled the airwaves, he wrote more emotional songs, proving that his talent wasn't confined to boisterous numbers. And it wasn't just commercial success. D R Nagaraj, the critic who was often cutting about big names in Kannada literature, and B V Karanth, the theatre guru who was critical of populist art, had words of appreciation for Hamsalekha. What they liked particularly was how he was bringing folk idioms, sarcasm, and college humour into film songs.

Hamsalekha has created music for about 500 albums, some of them private ones. A regular member of his hit factory was the singer S P Balasubramanyam, whose portrait gets pride of place in his studio. He has worked with almost all well-known singers in the film industry; he also roped in the classical maestro Balamuralikrishna to record one of his songs ('Devaru hoseda premada daara'). His song in the Rajkumar film 'Akasmika' (1993) has endured — 'Huttidare Kannada naadal huttabeku' is almost as popular as the state anthem.

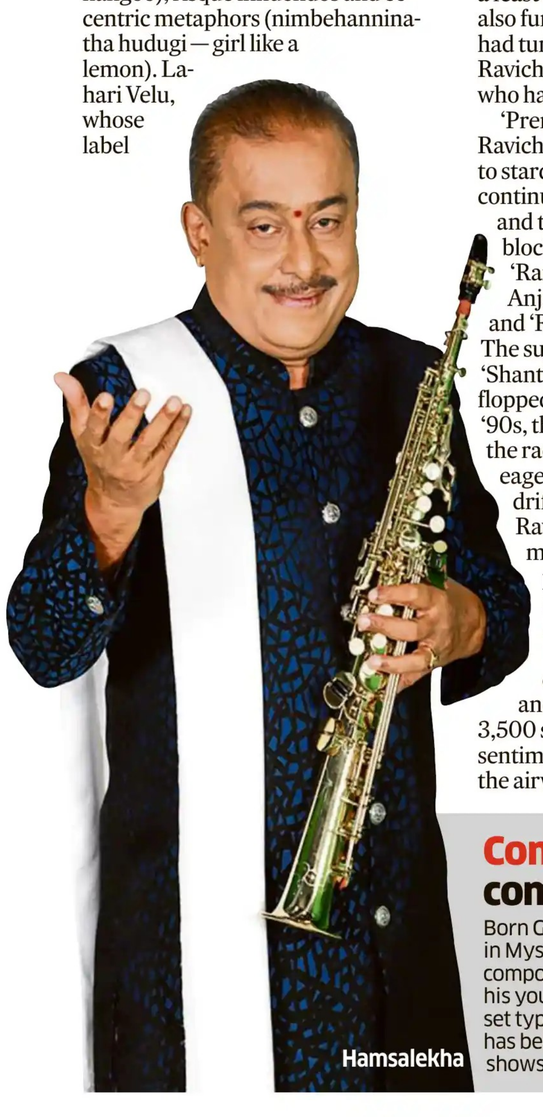
Folk inspiration

Hamsalekha's father Govindaraju ran a printing press in Chickpet, and he was friends with many Kannada lavani (ballad) singers. Lavani Neelakantappa was a wandering balladeer who occasionally dropped by, and liked what Hamsalekha was writing. He mentored the teen poet and gifted him a Swan pen. Hamsalekha adapted his pseudonym from it — he signed off as Hamsalekhani on a play he had written. Krishna Sa, his teacher at school, advised him to knock off the 'ni', and that is how he became Hamsalekha.

Folk poetry and folk music have remained an enduring passion for Hamsalekha. He holds an MA in folklore studies from Mysore University. Desi College of Music, which he runs from his house in Basaveshwarnagar in Bengaluru, offers undergraduate courses in music — the syllabus covers Hindustani, Karnatik, folk, and Western styles. The classes teach, among other things, ragas, folklore and film scoring techniques.

In recent years, Hamsalekha has been working on crafting music terminology in Kannada. He has coined new words — for example, hintala (before beat), muntala (after beat) and chintala (on beat, also gold beat). His inventiveness is not confined to lyrics alone.

At 74, Hamsalekha is preparing for his directorial debut, a musical drama titled OK. Not many music composers in Indian cinema write lyrics. On that score alone, Hamsalekha stands tall, and his discography remains an unmatched feat. Later lyricists like Yogaraj Bhat are carrying forward his experiments in wit and irreverence. The lifetime achievement is a richly deserved acknowledgement of a career marked by audacious landmarks.



Hamsalekha

FEEDBACK
Send your ideas and comments to dhonsat @deccanherald.co.in

Compositor to composer

Born Gangaraju on June 23, 1951, in Mysuru, Hamsalekha toiled as a compositor in the family press in his younger days. His job was to set type. In more recent years, he has been a presence on TV reality shows, judging young talent.

MOVIE REVIEWS

Punjab noir returns in darker avatar

RASHMI VASUDEVA

★★★★☆

Kohrra (S2)

Hindi, Punjabi (Netflix)

Director: Sudip Sharma, Faisal Rahman, Randeep Jha

Cast: Mona Singh, Barun Sobti, Rannvijay Singha

Mona Singh and Barun Sobti play cops.

It disorients, conceals as much as it reveals, gathers and dissipates. The first season of 'Kohrra' (Fog) dug deep into the metaphysical nature of its title, exploring it not only cinematically through the chilly, mist-laden landscapes of rural Punjab but also thematically through the investigation of a baffling murder.

The second season, this time headlined by Mona Singh as Dhanwant Kaur, the superior of Garundi (Barun Sobti), moves into denser terrain. It examines relationship fissures, migrant tragedies, violence within families, and a society that is deeply troubled yet refuses to crumble. Yes, there is a murder, a brutal one, but beneath it lies a meditation on the monstrosities of grief and the moral ambiguities that snarl at you when you least expect them.

It is astonishing how faithfully the sequel remains spiritually aligned with the first in its reiteration that violence often is 'short, brutish and nasty' and stems from raw wounds of the past.

Do not expect a conventional thriller. This is a slow-burn that wants to be an incisive social commentary, and it succeeds admirably. The pacing may not appeal to everyone, and if there is a genuine grouse, it lies in the reveal. While it is well-executed and satisfyingly shocking, there is a hint of contrivance; might the story have been stronger without?

Full marks to the cast. Mona Singh brings a mourning gravitas to her role, while Barun Sobti once again reveals his remarkable range and subtlety — qualities that have long defined his performances, even when he played the quintessential romantic hero.

Wuthering at heights, withering at core

TAHER AHMED

★★½☆☆

Wuthering Heights

English (Theatres)

Director: Emerald Fennell

Cast: Margot Robbie, Jacob Elordi, Hong Chau

Margot Robbie and Jacob Elordi play lovers.

Recreating a classic and adapting it to a larger audience require very different approaches. There is always the risk of the adaptation falling down a hole. 'Wuthering Heights' rides a rollercoaster, taking you to the pinnacle of love and dropping you back into the depths of lust.

Young Catherine Earnshaw (Margot Robbie) finds herself taking care of her 'pet', a boy her father saves from abuse, a boy she names Heathcliff (Jacob Elordi) after her dead brother. Growing up together, it is but evident that they are both in love with each other, but can they ever be together?

The movie shows two different versions of love, with the first half offering a fleeting glimpse of what love could have been — tender, unguarded, and free of calculation. This soon changes as the director trades brooding romance for burning desire, elevating lust to spectacle while letting emotional depth quietly decay. Carnal impulses surge through the film, untamed and insistent, reducing love to something urgent and bodily rather than enduring and selfless. The leads are driven more by hunger than devotion — a craving to possess, to consume, to be consumed.

While the performances of Robbie and Elordi are top-notch, the depth of other characters could have been enhanced.

Overall, beneath its polished surfaces lies a love story hollowed out by ego. What should feel like tragic fidelity becomes a study in ownership, where one's own passion takes precedence over another's peace. In reaching the heights of intensity, love quietly withers at its core.

Vishal's gangster film fails to deliver

MUKUND SETLUR

Shahid Kapoor

★½☆☆☆

O Romeo

Hindi (Theatres)

Director: Vishal Bhardwaj

Cast: Shahid Kapoor, Tripti Dimri, Avinash Tiwary

Based on Hussain Zaidi's 'Mafia Queens of Mumbai', 'O Romeo' is a tale of love and revenge between gangster Ustara (Shahid Kapoor) and Afshan (Tripti Dimri). Afshan wants revenge against her husband's killers. She hires Ustara for the task. Does she get her revenge? Do they fall in love? That pretty much sums up the plot. Incidentally, the foreword to Zaidi's book is written by director Vishal Bhardwaj. He writes that the lives of gangsters are much more fascinating to share than those of saints.

If you look at Bhardwaj's previous works, there is enough proof that he has the capacity to deliver stories of crime, passion and well-written female characters. But that is not the case with 'O Romeo'. It fails for many reasons, particularly for trying too hard to build larger-than-life images for both Kapoor's character (on the lines of his 'Kabir Singh') and the antagonist, Jalal. Elaborate sequences of Jalal, a matador fighting a bull hardly adds anything to the narrative.

The resolve of the female character, which is supposed to be a major part of the story, does not get enough space on its own. Before the credits roll, there is a disclaimer about cinematic liberty. But loopholes in the plot cannot be deemed as cinematic liberty. An ensemble of such veteran actors as Nana Patekar, Farida Jalal and Aruna Irani are underutilised.

There are some brilliant scenes, but for a cinematic nightmare of three hours, a few scenes are not worth the time. Some songs are likely to become chartbusters but mar the pace of the film! It looks like Bhardwaj was at crossroads while making directorial choices — to tell a story to appeal to the masses and in that process has failed to play to his strengths.

Stirring drama of first war crimes trial

KAUSTAV BHATTACHARYA

★★★★☆

Nuremberg

English (Prime Video)

Director: James Vanderbilt

Cast: Russell Crowe, Rami Malek, Leo Woodall

Set during the aftermath of World War II, James Vanderbilt's 'Nuremberg' is a high-intensity drama centred on the Nuremberg trials. The film follows the psychological examination of the Nazi leaders, particularly Hermann Göring. It is based on Jack El-Hai's book 'The Nazi and the Psychiatrist'.

How could humans commit such horrendous crimes was the driving force of the trials.

Douglas Kelley, an American military psychiatrist (Rami Malek) is sent to Nuremberg to ensure that Göring, Hitler's deputy and the other officers are fit to stand trial. In the film, Kelley tells his interpreter, 'If we could psychologically define evil, we could make sure something like this never happens again'.

Cinematic shots of the bombed ruins of Germany, the sombre courtroom décor and the oak-panelled drawing rooms lend the film a quiet gravitas.

Rami Malek comes across as a smart and clever, sometimes even cunning military psychiatrist. However, he fails to fully express the mental turbulence one might experience when confronted with such grotesque revelations of human cruelty. Russell Crowe, who plays Göring, brings a cool, calculated, and reserved personality.

There are some spine-chilling moments especially when Göring dismisses mass hatred and death camps as mere political strategy meant to settle scores with opponents.

However, in the end, the film offers little insight into what made these Nazi criminals different from ordinary people. It fails to capture Kelley's argument, as stated in his book, that they were not monsters but normal human beings, an idea similar to Hannah Arendt's 'Banality of Evil', which suggests that ordinary people can commit terrible crimes in extraordinary times.

From international wilderness to stirring comeback, southpaw has redefined his career

Mature Kishan finds PEACE & PURPOSE

MADHU JAWALI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

There is a sense of calmness to Ishan Kishan's belligerence. There's still a wild streak to him — the jocular guy in the room who loves leg-pulling or throwing harmless banter. But what used to be his second nature surfaces only sporadically. He now realises there is more to his life and cricket than just fooling around. And that understanding has come the hard way.

A couple of years ago, fresh off scoring the fastest ODI double hundred against Bangladesh, he made a decision that did not sit well with the men who mattered.

Rather than correcting the course, Kishan chose defiance. He reportedly preferred training at a private academy in Vadodara instead of turning up for domestic cricket with Jharkhand, despite a directive from the Board of Control for Cricket in India.

What followed was a brutal reality check. A career that seemed to be soaring was suddenly grounded as an irritated BCCI removed his name from the central contract list. For a wicketkeeper-batter who had been second in line behind Rishabh Pant, the road ahead looked uncertain.

There were only two paths available: either wallow in self-pity or fight his way back. Kishan chose the tougher, braver option. Indian cricket is now better for it.

"I think I'm a changed man now, to be honest," said Kishan in his post-match comments. "I don't get into it too much, but I do enjoy jokes and everything. I do it, but earlier I used to do it 24x7, but now it's just 2-3 hours of it. So I am just focusing more on batting and my wicket-keeping which is going to help the team and which is going to help me. Everything is secondary so I am not just always joking but especially under Gauti (Gautam Gambhir) Bhai," he said while letting out a loud laughter.

Kishan may or may not have read Paulo Coelho, but he would surely agree with the novelist's belief that when you truly want something, the universe finds ways to help you get there

He did his part first, compiling a stellar domestic season. Even then, a return to India's T20I side appeared unlikely. Sanju Samson had cemented himself as the second-choice wicketkeeper. Shubman Gill had reclaimed an opener's slot alongside Abhishek Sharma. Jitesh Sharma continued to impress as a finisher.

Yet cricket has a habit of opening doors at unexpected moments. As Kishan piled on runs in Jharkhand's Vijay Hazare Trophy-winning campaign, Gill struggled for rhythm after the successful Samson-Abhishek opening pair was split. Dropping Gill, India's Test and ODI captain and skipper of IPL franchise Gujarat Titans, was bold. But the selectors took the plunge.

Gill made way for Kishan. Rinku Singh returned as the finisher and Jitesh, for no fault of his, paid the price.

Even then, Kishan's place in the World Cup XI was far from guaranteed. With Samson once again partnering Abhishek, the Jharkhand left-hander had a narrow window. The five-match series against New Zealand, the final preparation for India, became his audition.

Opportunity, however, arrived through misfortune. Tilak Varma was injured and missed the series. Kishan slid into the middle order and made it his own, hammering 215 runs in four matches, including a commanding century. At the same time, Samson endured five straight failures and ruled himself out of the playing XI.

By the time the World Cup rolled around, Kishan had done enough. And he has kept doing more.

Now the undisputed first-choice stumper-batter, Kishan underlined his status with another blistering knock, 61 off 24 balls with six fours and five sixes, on Thursday against Namibia.

It wasn't mindless slogging, though. There was a method to his madness on a slightly sticky pitch. He bided his time, sussed up the conditions and began his onslaught. He is not just a changed person now, but he has transformed as a batter too.

"I do take singles as well and I do defend the good balls," he emphasised. "But I don't know if I've done a very big amount of hard work or something, I just kept it simple rather than rushing into the overs or getting excited and playing those shots. I'm just trying to be calm and just trying to watch the ball and playing those shots which I already had, but sometimes you get excited and play those shots when you're playing international cricket."

What a story of self-belief and hard-learned lessons!

Ishan Kishan's 61 off 24 balls against Namibia wasn't mindless slogging as he had a method to his madness on a slightly sticky pitch. PTI

Zimbabwe hand Australia another World Cup shock

COLOMBO, PTI

Zimbabwe rode on collective brilliance to pull off the first big upset of the ongoing T20 World Cup, stunning injury-ravaged former champions Australia by 23 runs here on Friday.

This was only the second time that the African nation defeated the traditional heavyweights in the format, having last beaten them back in the 2007 edition of the showpiece.

Riding on opener Brian Bennett's unbeaten 64 and useful contributions from other top-order batters, Zimbabwe posted a challenging 169 for 2 after Australia, who were without some of their front-line bowlers, invited them to bat.

The lower-ranked side then bowled Australia out for 146 in 19.3 overs on a sluggish pitch to register a famous win.

Pacer Blessing Muzarabani returned figures of 4/17, while Brad Evans (3/23), Wellington Masakadza (1/36) and Ryan Burl (1/9) also delivered with the ball for Zimbabwe.

It was a disaster for Australia in their pursuit of 170 as they suffered a top-order collapse and were reduced to 29 for 4 in 4.3 overs with Josh Inglis (8), Travis Head (17), Cameron Green (0) and Tim David (0) dismissed cheaply.

Matt Renshaw played a lone hand for Australia with a 44-ball 65 while Glenn Maxwell made 31. From 38 for 4 at the end of Powerplay, Australia reached 67 for 4 at the halfway mark with 103 runs needed for a win.

Maxwell and Renshaw then stitched a fifth-wicket stand of 77 runs off 9.5 overs to bring Australia back. But Ryan Burl broke the partnership as Maxwell inside-edged one onto the stumps.

Australia needed 56 runs from the final five overs but Marcus Stoinis, who earlier left the field after being hit during the Zimbabwe innings, got out soon for 6.

Bennett took a stunning catch near the boundary to dismiss Ben Dwarshuis (7) for Brad Evan's third wicket of the day.

The target became 34 from 12 balls but Australia lost Renshaw and Adam Zampa (2) in the 19th over, and Matthew Kuhnemann (0) was run out in the final over.

Earlier, Zimbabwe's top-order batters fired collectively against a depleted Australia bowling attack to post a challenging 169 for 2.

Bennett struck seven fours from the 56 balls and laid the foundation for Zimbabwe for a big total, reaching 125 for one at the end of the 15th over. But Australia came back in the death overs, just conceding 44 runs in the final five overs.

Wicket-keeper Tadiwanashe Marumani and Ryan Burl chipped in with 35 each while captain Sikandar Raza remained not out on 25 off 13 balls.

Zimbabwe's Blessing Muzarabani (left) celebrates with team-mates after taking one of the Australian wickets during his match-winning spell of 4/17 at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo on Friday. AFP

Zimbabwe's WC wins vs Australia

1983 WC (ODI): Won by 13 runs (Trent Bridge)
2007 WC (T20I): Won by 5 wkts (Cape Town)
2026 WC (T20I): Won by 23 runs (Colombo)

OTHER WINS
2014: Won by 3 wkts (ODI, Harare)
2022: Won by 3 wkts (ODI, Townsville)

Taylor ruled out

In a massive blow to Zimbabwe, veteran wicketkeeper-batter Brendan Taylor has been ruled out of the tournament due to the injury he sustained in a group match earlier this week.

The 40-year-old Taylor had limped off the ground after retiring hurt in the match against Oman, which they had won by eight wickets here on February 9. The exact nature of his injury is not yet clear.

Brief scores: Zimbabwe: 169/2 in 20 overs (Brian Bennett 64 n.o., Tadiwanashe Marumani 35, Ryan Burl 35, Sikandar Raza 25 n.o.) bt Australia: 146 all out in 19.3 overs (Glenn Maxwell 31, Matt Renshaw 65; Blessing Muzarabani 4-17; Brad Evans 3-23). **Result:** Zim won by 23 runs. **PoM:** Blessing Muzarabani.

Just move away when Usman pauses: Ashwin

NEW DELHI, PTI: Spin great R Ashwin has a simple suggestion for Indian batters as they gear up to deal with the unique side-arm action of Pakistan off-spinner Usman Tariq come Sunday -- just move away when he pauses before delivering the ball.

The 30-year-old Tariq, whose stop-and-pause action has created quite a stir, has played four T20Is and taken 11 wickets at an astonishing economy rate of less than six runs per over.

He could play a decisive role in Sunday's T20 World Cup clash between the bitter foes on a slow Premadasa track.

"If he stops before delivering the ball, the batsman has the right to move away. He can say that 'I thought he is stopping'. That will be an interesting case and a huge headache for the umpire," Ashwin said on his *Youtube* channel 'Ash Ki Baat'.

Usman Tariq

"If I was there I would have done it. One should do everything to win a game within rules. I would simply say I don't know when he will release the ball and I would step away. If I move away, it is the umpire's responsibility.

"Imagine the pressure on Usman Tariq in the middle of the match. It would be an incredible joyride. He is the ace up their sleeves, imagine what he becomes if the batsman reacts like that."

Tariq's unique action has divided the cricket world but Ashwin had earlier supported him. Pakistan are using Tariq sparingly. He has become the talk of the cricketing universe with former England skipper Kevin Pietersen terming his stop-and-pause action illegal.

Ashwin called for real-time competition testing tool to check if his side-arm action falls within the permissible 15-degree limit as per ICC's rulebook. The rule allows 15-degree straightening of the elbow joint for all bowlers in international cricket.

'Auld Enemy' England clash with Scotland

KOLKATA, PTI

LIVE 3 PM

A floundering England will square off against traditional sporting rivals Scotland here on Saturday in a must-win T20 World Cup match that could well determine which of the two teams progresses to the Super Eight stage from Group C.

West Indies sit atop with back-to-back wins, while Scotland, Italy and England -- all with one win each -- are separated only by net run rate. Scotland hold the second spot thanks to their massive win against Italy.

So, Saturday's clash could give either side a decisive edge in the race for second place as both are expected to win their final group games, with Scotland facing Nepal and England taking on Italy.

Their rivalry, born with football's first official International in 1872, has long been fuelled by history and identity.

On the cricket field, it's still new but has steadily acquired its own narrative.

Scotland had stunned England by six runs after posting a massive 371/5 in a one-off ODI in Edinburgh in 2018, and in the 2024 T20 World Cup, their group match was washed out after Scotland raced to 90 without loss in 10 overs, a result that had derailed England's campaign.

For the Scots on the cricket pitch, there is some unfinished business.

Openers George Munsey and Michael Jones had put on an unbroken 90-run stand in that abandoned 2024 encounter and will look to finish what they started against the 'Auld Enemy' (Scottish term for old enemy) at Eden Gardens.

The duo had smashed England ace spinner Adil Rashid for 26 runs in two overs and their match-up will once again be a highlight.

The 2022 champions England find themselves under mounting pressure, especially after a 30-run defeat to the West Indies which has complicated the scenario for the Harry Brook-led side after it scraped through by four runs in the opener against Nepal.

With one loss and a win, Harry Brook-led England hope to get their act together against Scotland on Saturday. PTI

Siddique, Aryansh take UAE past Canada

NEW DELHI, PTI: Junaid Siddique's five-wicket haul was complemented by Aryansh Sharma's half-century as the United Arab Emirates defeated Canada by five wickets in their ICC Men's T20 World Cup match here on Friday.

Senior pacer Siddique headlined a disciplined bowling effort, returning with figures of 5/35 to help UAE restrict Canada to a below-par 150 for 7.

Aryansh then struck an unbeaten 74 off 53 balls laced with six fours and three sixes while Sohaib Khan also played a very useful knock of 51 off just 29 balls to guide UAE over the line with two balls to spare.

Chasing the modest total, UAE struggled to build momentum and lost wickets at regular intervals even as Aryansh held firm at one end.

Left-arm spinner Saad Bin Zafar (3/14) dented the chase with three key strikes.

UAE skipper Muhammad Waseem was the first to depart, falling to pacer Kaleem Sana. Zafar then dismantled the middle order, first dismissing Alishan Sharafu, who mistimed a cover drive to Nicholas Kirton at extra cover, before removing Mayank Kumar and Harshit Kaushik with catches at long-on and mid-wicket respectively.

Brief scores: Canada: 150/7 in 20 overs (Navneet Dhaliwal 34, Harsh Thaker 50; Junaid Siddique 5-35) lt to UAE: 151/5 in 19.4 overs (Aryansh Sharma 74, Sohaib Khan 51; Saad Bin Zafar 3-14). **Result:** UAE won by five wickets.
PoM: Junaid Siddique.

A battle of table-toppers in the group of death

Unbeaten New Zealand, South Africa meet in high-voltage clash

VIGNESH BHARADWAJ
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

A resolute South African unit, on the back of winning a heart-stopping double Super Over, will meet an on-song New Zealand in a battle of batting might at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad here on Saturday.

With Super 8s qualification all but secured, the two unbeaten teams in Group D will strive to stamp authority in the Group of Death, which has lived up to its billing so far.

The Kiwis, who had a subpar build-up to the ICC showpiece, entered the tournament on the back of a 4-1 T20I drubbing from India. However, they have put the experience gained over the last four weeks to good use, spreading their wings with some newfound energy, thanks to the batting pyrotechnics of openers Tim Seifert and Finn Allen.

They have treated their opposition attacks with utter disdain. Having been inserted to bowl on both occasions in the competition, they have chased down targets of 175 in 15.2 overs and 183 in 17.5 overs.

However, they will need to exercise caution against a South African side, boasting a top-class pace battery, led by Lungi Ngidi, who has been pivotal, picking up seven wickets. He could prove more than a handful if New Zealand fail to read his deceptiveness.

On the bowling front, Matt Henry has been forming a decent partnership with fellow quicks Lockie Ferguson and Jacob Duffy, but they have been nowhere near where they would want to be with games coming thick and fast.

The other worrying factor for New Zealand in an otherwise happy campaign has been the loss of Michael Bracewell to injury. However, they have added off-spinning all-rounder Cole McConchie and young pacer Ben Sears as reserves.

New Zealand, who are running red-hot, also have recent history on their side, winning four of the last five T20I meetings against South Africa.

The challenge, however, would be to come good on the day, given the thin margins of T20 cricket.

And that is something South Africa will attest to. Skipper Aiden Markram will hope for proceedings to be less dramatic after staying long enough on the field for two points against Afghanistan.

Batting-wise, Quinton de Kock, Ryan Rickelton and Markram have runs next to their names and have also looked in good touch, despite not being able convert them into something substantial.

With Dewald Brevis, David Miller and Tristan Stubbs also hitting the straps, the middle-order could pose a serious threat to an under-fire New Zealand attack.

Despite a wobble with the ball in the final stages against the Afghans, the Proteas avoided a mishap, with the experienced Keshav Maharaj holding his nerve.

While Ngidi has been incisive, South Africa will be hoping he receives support from Marco Jansen and Kagiso Rabada.

South Africa will be fretting over Rabada, who possesses all requisite skills, but has had two forgettable days with the ball in hand.

Throwing in the fact that South Africa have a far better idea of the conditions at the Narendra Modi Stadium, having played both their fixtures here, could certainly come in handy on Saturday.

Both teams have quality attacks, but this one is shaping up to be a big hitting fest for their group's bragging rights.

Teams: New Zealand: Mitchell Santner (captain), Tim Seifert (wk), Finn Allen, Devon Conway, Rachin Ravindra, Glenn Phillips, Mark Chapman, Daryl Mitchell, James Neesham, Michael Bracewell, Matt Henry, Lockie Ferguson, Trent Boult, Jacob Duffy, and Ish Sodhi.
South Africa: Aiden Markram (captain), Quinton de Kock (wk), Ryan Rickelton, Reeza Hendricks, Dewald Brevis, David Miller, Tristan Stubbs, Heinrich Klaasen (wk), Marco Jansen, Kagiso Rabada, Lungi Ngidi, Anrich Nortje, Keshav Maharaj, Tabraiz Shamsi, and Bjorn Fortuin.

LIVE 7 PM
After an exhausting double Super Over win against Afghanistan, South Africa captain Aiden Markram will hope for a less dramatic affair against New Zealand. PTI

USA outclass the Netherlands

CHENNAI, PTI

Saiteja Mukkamalla's attractive 79 and a four-wicket haul by former India U-19 star Harmeet Singh powered United States to a comfortable 93-run victory over the Netherlands in a group league fixture of the T20 World Cup here on Friday.

This is USA's first-ever T20I victory over the Netherlands. Mukkamalla's 51-ball knock formed the cornerstone of USA's competitive total of 196 for 6 while all-rounder Shubham Ranjane once again proved his prowess with an invaluable 24-ball 48 not out.

Left-arm spinner Harmeet Singh (4/21) didn't bowl too many wicket-taking deliveries yet Netherlands batters were left in a tangle as they were bowled out for 103 in 15.5 overs.

Harmeet's figures were the best by a USA bowler in a T20 World Cup match. In fact, two of Harmeet's wickets -- opener Max O'Dowd (13) and all-rounder Bas de Leede (23) -- were half-trackers that were deposited to the fielders.

Brief scores: USA: 196/6 in 20 overs (Monank Patel 36, Saiteja Mukkamalla 79, Shubham Ranjane 48 n.o.; Bas de Leede 3-37) bt Netherlands: 103 all out in 15.5 (Harmeet Singh 4-21, Shadley van Schalkwyk 3-21, Mohammad Mohsin 2-19). **Result:** USA won by 93 runs. **PoM:** Harmeet Singh.

Harmeet Singh

With captain Stirling out, Ireland face uphill task

COLOMBO, PTI: Ireland suffered a major blow on Friday as their captain Paul Stirling was ruled out of the remainder of the T20 World Cup after sustaining ligament damage to his right knee, ahead of their group match against Oman on Saturday.

LIVE 11 AM

Stirling hurt his right knee when completing a catch during Ireland's 67-run loss to Australia here on Wednesday. The experienced captain aggravated the injury later in the same match when he attempted a quick single after returning to the crease to bat.

The T20 World Cup Event Technical Committee has approved a replacement player for Stirling, with uncapped youngster Sam Topping joining Ireland's 15-player squad with immediate effect. With their Super Eight hopes all but over after two consecutive defeats, Stirling's absence will hurt Ireland when they take on Oman - the two bottom-placed teams in Group B.

Both teams have suffered two losses respectively and will be desperate to register their first victory in the tournament.

Bhujang wins Panipat Plate

DELHI RESULTS

Ajay Sharma-trained Bhujang and to be ridden by SG Prasad won the Panipat Plate, the feature event of the races on Friday.

1. Royal Hooves Plate - 1400M: Shahzada (Sunny Kumar) 1; Nizbati Warrior (Faizan Khan) 2; Galway Bay (Narendra Kumar) 3; Senor (SG Prasad) 4; Wb: Shd, 1-3/4, 1-3/4L. T: 1:26.64. TB: Mohsin Khan. Fav: Galway Bay.

2. Panipat Plate - 1000M: Bhujang (SG Prasad) 1; Ashwa Bravo (Aasif Khan) 2; Ashwa Zorawar (Shivam) 3; Ashwa Tokyo (Vishal) 4; Wb: Nk, Nk, 1-1/4L. T:0:59.31. TB: Ajay Sharma. Fav: Asjwa Tokyo.

3. Hanging Garden Plate - 1200M: Daring Diva (SG Prasad) 1; Telekinesis (MB Qureshi) 2; Humaira (Angad) 3; Striking Distance (RN Manjhi) 4; Wb: 1-3/4, 2-1/4, 1/2L. 1:14.59. TB: Ajay Sharma. Fav: Daring Diva.

4. Golden Kingdom Plate - 1200M: Ashwa Kohima (Vishal Shivhare) 1; Beejay (Angad) 2; Golden Sun (Dhanu Deora) 3; Eyes On The Prize (A Rajput) 4; Wb: 1-1/4, 1-1/4L, Shd. T: 1:12.30. TB: Irfan Ali. Fav: Golden Sun.

5. Kurukshetra Plate - 1000M: Bahadur (Arjun) 1; Winning Legacy (Rakesh) 2; Big Daddy (Vishal) 3; Chieftain (Shivam) 4; Wb: 1-1/4, Nk, 4-1/2L T: 0:59.92. TB: Imdad Ali Khan. Fav: Bahadur.

6. Hisar Plate - 1200M: Emperor Ashoka (Akash Rajput) 1; Vedhagarbha (Rakesh) 2; Divine Right (Sunny Kumar) 3; Jet Falcon (Saurav Rawat) 4; Wb: Nk, 3/4, 3-3/4L. T: 1:13.44. TB: Rajinder. Fav: Emperor Ashoka.

Bengaluru dividends

I race: Rs 79w; 27, 45p; Fc: Rs 3,332; Q: Rs 325; Shp: Rs 74; Thp: Rs 54; Tri: Rs 3,630 & 345; Ex: Rs 8,178 & 1,752.
II race: Rs 24w; 10, 16p; Fc: Rs 85; Q: Rs 35; Shp: Rs 29; Thp: Rs 20; Tri: Rs 223 & 109.
III race: Rs 17w; 14, 12p; Fc: Rs 25; Q: Rs 18; Shp: Rs 18; Thp: Rs 40; Tri: Rs 67 & 64; Ex: Rs 294 & 119.
IV race: Rs 35w; 11, 18, 10p; Fc: Rs 380; Q: Rs 155; Shp: Rs 45; Thp: Rs 90; Tri: Rs 494 & 104; Ex: Rs 1,275 & 807.
V race: Rs 24w; 10, 17, 19p; Fc: Rs 314; Q: Rs 148; Shp: Rs 72; Thp: Rs 41; Tri: Rs 2,251 & 1,072; Ex: Rs 7,143 & 1,750.
VI race: Rs 16w; 12, 13, 13p; Fc: Rs 52; Q: Rs 48; Shp: Rs 35; Thp: Rs 52; Tri: Rs 96 & 34; Ex: Rs 1,559 & 1,337.
Jackpot: Rs 12,637 (16). **Runner-up:** Rs 1,547 (56). **Treble:** Rs 1,097 (65).

Admiringly for Calcutta Million

KOLKATA SELECTIONS

Aashay Doctor-trained Admiringly, to be ridden by Trevor Patel, appeals most in the small field of three runners in the fray for the Calcutta Million, the feature event of the races run over a mile on Saturday. The first race starts at 2 pm.

1. Pentire Handicap - 1600M: Verrazanno 1, Dancing Queen 2, Midnight Star 3.
2. Aashna Handicap (Div I) - 1100M: Mountain Gold 1, Cashable 2, Tres Bien 3.
3. Aashna Handicap (Div II) - 1100M: Immortal Beauty 1, Cashmere Silk 2, Winsangel 3.
4. Calcutta Million - 1600M: Admiringly 1, Saiko 2.
5. Carring Minds Cup - 1600M: Dusenberg 1, Cigar Galaxy 2, Multi Success 3.
6. Metropolitan - 1200M: Pantazi 1, Glorious King 2, Black Eagle 3.
7. Sentouki Handicap - 2400M: Heart 1, Multverse 2.
Day's best: Heart. **Jackpot:** 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. **I treble:** 2, 3, 4. **II treble:** 5, 6, 7.

Parag named RR new captain

NEW DELHI, PTI: All-rounder Riyan Parag was on Friday named Rajasthan Royals skipper for the upcoming IPL, marking a leadership reset after Sanju Samson left for CSK.

CRICKET LEGENDS HONOURED

Home is where the heart is

Kumble, Dravid thank KSCA as bowling ends are named after them

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Karnataka State Cricket Association honoured some of the State's greats by naming the spectators' stands and bowling ends after them.

This is in addition to the existing stand names that the previous Managing Committee had undertaken.

The two bowling ends -- Pavilion End and Northern End -- were named after two of Karnataka's greatest exports Anil Kumble and Rahul Dravid respectively.

The other new additions are Shantha Rangaswamy (B Lower stand), late C Nagaraj (M3 stand) and late Dr (Capt) K Thimmappaiah (M4 stand).

Speaking on the occasion, Kumble termed KSCA his cricketing home from age-group cricket to the Ranji Trophy.

"It's really nice that Rahul and Shantha are also being recognised for their massive contributions to Karnataka and Indian cricket, along with Dr Thimmappaiah and Mr C Nagraj. Congratulations! To see the stands named after so many of our legends – some who I had the privilege of playing with and others who set the tone and example for us to follow and emulate - is just wonderful.

"I don't think it will be out of turn to state that all of our contributions have made Karnataka cricket what it is, just as Karnataka cricket is what has made all of us. It's not really about whose name is on which stand. It's truly special that all the contributions have been recognised and are now permanently etched in the stadium. All the names that adorn the stands have all played a significant role in my journey, either as teammates or selectors or coaches or administrators or well-wishers or just with a word of encouragement here, a pat on the back there," Kumble elaborated.

For Kumble, who sits on top of India's highest Test wicket-takers' list, Karnataka meant the world.

"No matter how much one might have played for India, coming back to play for Karnataka meant the world to me, and I know I am speaking for Rahul and for all those from our state, men and women, who have represented the country. Don't get me wrong – it is a privilege to play for the nation. In India's long history as a Test-playing country, only 318 men have played in Test matches. But when you came back into the Karnataka dressing room, it was like returning home."

Dravid echoed Kumble's sentiments and called KSCA his second home.

"Like Anil said, we've probably spent more time here than we've spent in our houses," Dravid noted. "It's been a place of great happiness, sometimes great disappointment as well, but a place that has truly given me everything that I am today. I can never be more grateful for what the KSCA and this iconic ground have given me in my life.

"I'm really thankful and grateful that Venkatesh Prasad and his committee thought it apt to name an end after me. I know this would mean a lot. I know this would mean a lot to my family. My father, who a lot of you may know, loved the game and he was really instrumental in creating that love for the sport that I have. He brought me here for many games, not only the Test matches, but also for Ranji Trophy games."

KSCA president Venkatesh Prasad (left), former Indian men's team captains Anil Kumble (second from left) and Rahul Dravid (right) with former Indian women's team captain Shanta Rangaswamy during an event at the M Chinnaswamy on Friday. DH PHOTO/ KRISHNAKUMAR PS

EXISTING STANDS

- P1: Erapalli Prasanna; P2: GR Vishwanath; P Terrace: BS Chandrasekhar; P Corporate: Syed Kirmani; M1: Brijesh Patel; M2: Roger Binny; Diamond Box: Anil Kumble; N Stand: Rahul Dravid; P1A: Javagal Srinath; P4: Venkatesh Prasad.
- NEW ADDITIONS
- B Lower stand: Shantha Rangaswamy; M3 stand: Late C Nagaraj; M4 stand: Late Dr (Capt) K Thimmappaiah.
- BOWLING ENDS
- Northern end: Rahul Dravid; Pavilion end: Anil Kumble.

Amanpreet leads India's clean sweep in 25m CF pistol

India top standings with 13 gold, 11 silver and nine bronze

NEW DELHI, PTI

India's pistol stalwart Amanpreet Singh clinched the biggest medal of his career, striking gold in the 25m centre fire event as the country completed a clean sweep of the podium on the concluding day of the Asian Championship here on Friday.

The 38-year-old Amanpreet fired a stellar 589 to claim gold, edging out fellow countryman and Olympian Gurpreet Singh, who scored 584 for silver, while Ankur Goel secured bronze with 570, completing India's sweep of the 25m centre fire podium.

The Indian trio dominated the team event as well, amassing a commanding 1743 points to clinch team gold, while Vietnam secured silver with a total of 1671 points.

India signed off in style, collecting seven medals on the final day to cap a dominant campaign. The team finished with an impressive overall tally of 33 medals in the senior rifle and pistol events -- 13 gold, 11 silver and nine bronze.

Ace Indian shooter Sift Kaur Samra too delivered a stirring performance in the women's 50m rifle prone event, fighting till the very last shot to clinch a well-earned silver medal.

Adding to the country's medal tally, seasoned campaigner Tejaswini Sawant displayed remarkable poise and precision to clinch the bronze, completing a memorable double podium finish for India, while Kazakhstan's Yelizaveta Bezrukova soared to the gold with a commanding performance.

Samra, fired a superb 623.2 but missed out on gold.

Amanpreet Singh takes gold in the men's 25m centre fire at the Asian Rifle/Pistol Championships in New Delhi on Friday. NRAI

Marians win Rural basketball title

BENGALURU, DHNS

Marians BC Chikkamagaluru defeated National SC Mysuru 85-65 in a one-sided final to claim the men's title at the Karnataka Rural League Basketball Championship at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium Courts here on Friday.

Om Shetty and Rishabh scored 20 and 19 points, respectively, to keep Marians in command of the summit clash.

Results: Final: Marians BC Chikkamagaluru: 85 (Om Shetty 20, Rishabh 19) bt National SC Mysuru: 65 (Ronak 24, Shlok 17). HT: 44-33.
Third-place match: Mangalore BC: 79 (Deekshith 16, Divith 14) bt Protec Association Mysuru: 77 (Ranjith 28, Ranen 22) HT: 41-47.

Marians BC Chikkamagaluru pose with the Karnataka Rural Basketball League Championship trophy at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru on Friday. STANDING (from left): Om Shetty, Vinod Gowda, Aswin Kumar (coach), Navin Charles, Dilip Kumar. KNEELING: Rishab Kumar, Sujoy Das, Bharath Kumar B and Darshan Dandewale. DH PHOTO/ PUSHKAR V

Teen Choi recovers from fall to shock Kim at Winter Games

LIVIGNO (ITALY), AFP

South Korean teenager Choi Gaon recovered from a brutal fall to shock US snowboard superstar Chloe Kim in the Olympic women's halfpipe final on Thursday as the American missed out on a historic hat-trick.

Choi, 17, scored a competition-high 90.25 in her third run at Livigno Snow Park to top Kim's mark of 88.00 with the American forced to settle for silver. Japan's Mitsuki Ono took bronze with a score of 85.00.

World Cup leader Choi recovered from a dramatic fall on her first outing, which resulted in a score of just 10.00.

Choi Gaon. REUTERS

She clipped the lip of the halfpipe, sliding down the wall, and lay motionless on the ice as medics went to her aid.

Choi fell again early on her second run, leaving her Olympic dream at the Milan-Cortina Games hanging by a thread.

But she saved her best for last, landing a brilliant third run under intense pressure.

Meanwhile, Cross-country skiing great Johannes Klaebo won the men's 10km interval start race on Friday to collect a record-equalling eighth Winter Olympics gold medal.

Also, Ukrainian skeleton racer Vladyslav Heraskevych has lost his appeal against his disqualification for wearing a helmet adorned with pictures of the Ukrainian war dead, sport's top court announced.

The Court had found that "freedom of expression is guaranteed at the Olympic Games, but not on the field of play, which is a sacred principle."

RWF clinch thriller vs Eagles to keep promotion hopes alive

BENGALURU, DHNS: Rail Wheel Factory FC kept their title and promotion hopes alive as they defeated Bangalore Eagles 5-3 in a goalfest thriller during the BDFA A Division League Championship at the Bangalore Football Stadium on Friday.

LOCAL FOOTBALL

RWF, now on 24 points from 12 matches, moved ahead of Eagles (22 from 12) to fourth position while Stride Sports hold firm at the top with 28 from 11.

In a see-saw battle that saw both sides end the first half level at 3-3, Ashish's header from a corner at the 55th minute followed by Prakash Chandar's 75th minute insurance goal, sealed the match for RWF.

Meanwhile, BTM FC defeated Blitz 2-0 and moved to third place. Also, DYES FC suffered another drubbing (0-8) to Income Tax and dropped into the relegation zone with their coaching staff once again absent from the bench.

Results: RWF FC: 5 (Rajesh S 11th, 22nd, Rohan K 40th, Ashish 55th, Prakash Chandar 75th) bt Bangalore Eagles FC: 3 (Mohammad Ameenuddin 13th, 30th, Vinod B 43rd); BTM FC: 2 (Nakshatra Jain 33rd, Devaraj 85th) bt Blitz FC: 0; AGORC FC: 3 (Jaikumar Y 12th, Jones Bethsalel 29th, 61st) bt Real ChikkaMagaluru FC: 2 (Allan Paul R 67th, Ashish Beckham 81st); Income Tax: 8 (Abdul Rahman 6th, Darin Christopher 36th, 40th, 43rd, Dennis Cotter 38th, 81st, Akshay KS 68th, 79th) bt DYES FC: 0.

Atletico thump Barca 4-0

Antoine Griezmann

MADRID, AFP: Atletico Madrid hammered Copa del Rey holders Barcelona 4-0 on Thursday night in the first leg of their semifinal.

After an Eric Garcia own goal sent Diego Simeone's side ahead early on, Antoine Griezmann, Ademola Lookman and Julian Alvarez struck to give Atletico a landslide lead by half-time.

Barca defender Garcia was sent off in the final stages, with Atletico maintaining their significant advantage on the record 32-time winners, which they will take into the second leg at Camp Nou on March 3.

Result: Atletico Madrid: 4 (Eric Garcia 7th og, Griezmann 14th, Lookman 33rd, Alvarez 45+2nd) bt Barcelona: 0

Arsenal held

Arsenal missed the chance to extend their Premier League lead to six points as Brentford rattled the Gunners in a 1-1 draw on Thursday to give Manchester City hope in the title race, reports AFP from London.

Noni Madueke headed the leaders in front on the hour mark, but the Bees were well worthy of at least a point and levelled through Keane Lewis-Potter.

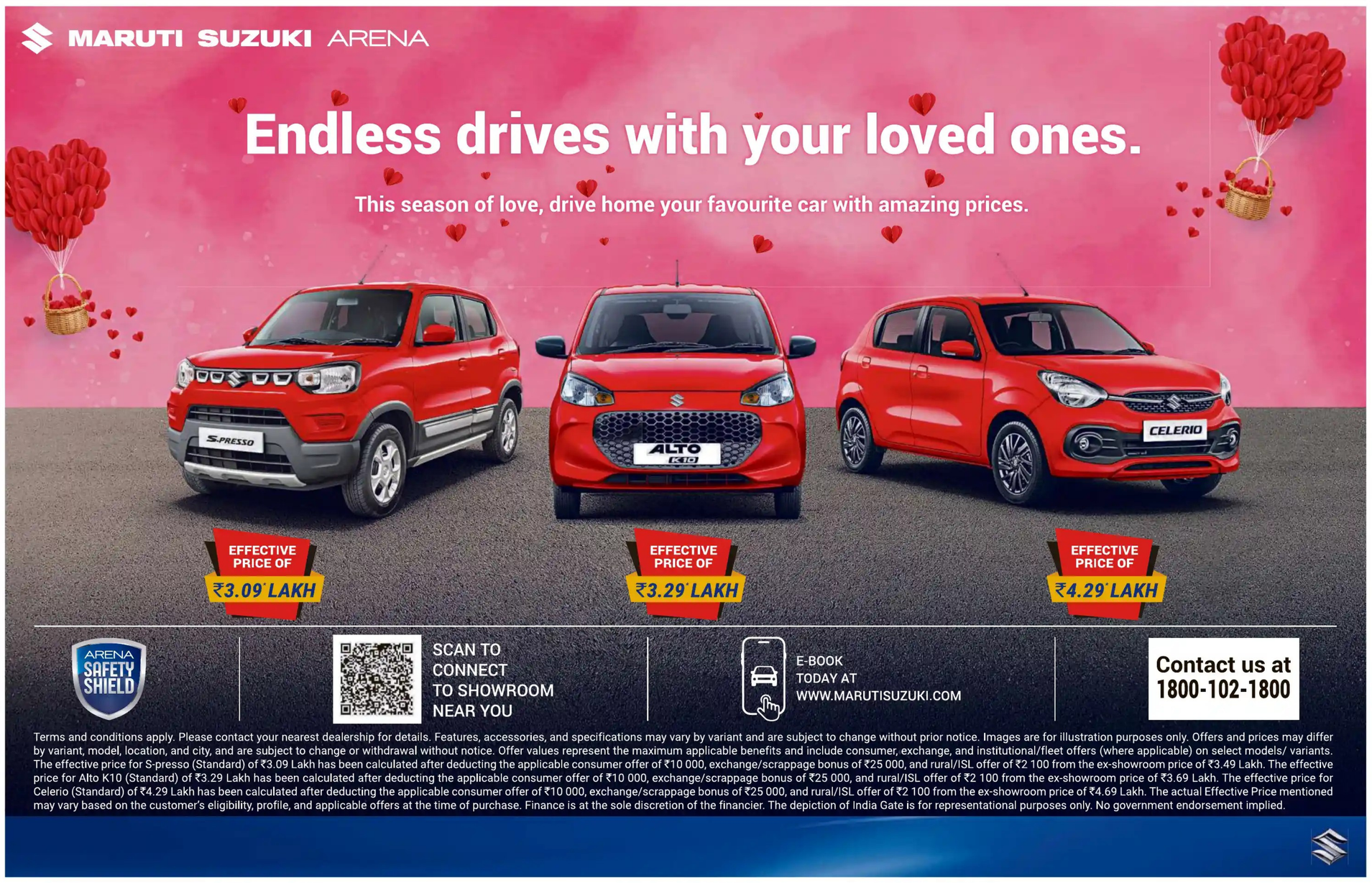
Result: Brentford: 1 (Lewis-Potter 71st) drew with Arsenal: 1 (Madueke 61st).

K'taka batters dominate Day 1

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karthikeya KP missed out on a ton by a whisker while Dhruv Prabhakar was just seven away from it as Karnataka batters put 352/3 on day one of their Elite Group D match of the Col CK Nayudu Trophy against hosts Himachal Pradesh in Amtar on Friday.

Openers Prakar Chaturvedi (55) and Faizan Khan (52) laid the foundation for the big total while Prashant Kumar (3/57) picked all the wickets to fall on the day.

Brief scores: Karnataka: 352/3 in 90 overs (Prakar Chaturvedi 55, Faizan 52, Karthikeya KP 97, Dhruv Prabhakar 93 n.o., Aneeshwar Gautam 41 n.o.; Prashant Kumar 3-57) vs HP.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DECCAN HERALD
Saturday, February 14, 2026

DH DECCAN HERALD
Wknd.

Pancreatic cancer: Key to survival is in early detection

It's called 'silent disease' as the early symptoms are often unrecognised.

Dr Darshan Patil, Consultant - Surgical Oncology, **Aster CMI Hospital**, throws light on symptoms, treatment and importance of early diagnosis

Pancreatic cancer is known as 'silent disease' because its early signs are easy to ignore. Many people mistake the symptoms for common stomach issues, back pain or stress-related weight loss. As a result, diagnosis is often delayed.

Awareness is the first step toward timely treatment. When pancreatic cancer is detected early and managed appropriately, the outcome is significantly better.

The pancreas is a small but vital organ located deep inside the abdomen, behind the stomach. It plays two important roles - helps in digestion by producing digestive juices and regulates blood sugar by producing insulin. When cancer develops in the pancreas, it can affect digestion, blood sugar control and overall health, often before obvious symptoms appear.

Pancreatic cancer does not usually cause dramatic early symptoms. Because the pancreas lies deep inside the body, a small tumour cannot be felt during routine examination. Early symptoms tend to be vague and common, such as indigestion or back pain. Many people delay consulting a doctor, assuming it will settle on its own. Unfortunately, this delay can allow the disease to progress.

Dr Darshan Patil

When should you consult a specialist?
- Persistent abdominal or back pain
- Unexplained weight loss
- Jaundice
- Digestive symptoms that do not improve
- Sudden changes in blood sugar levels

Early attention saves lives. Awareness empowers. Hope lies in timely action.

Don't ignore early warning

Most of the early symptoms are common and often harmless. However, if they persist for weeks or worsen over time, medical evaluation is needed.

They include:
- Persistent pain in the upper abdomen or back
- Unexplained weight loss
- Loss of appetite or early fullness
- Ongoing indigestion or bloating not relieved by treatment
- Yellowing of the eyes or skin (jaundice)
- Dark urine or pale stools
- New-onset diabetes in adults over 50
- Extreme tiredness without clear reason

It is not the presence of one symptom, but persistence and combination of symptoms that should raise concern.

Who is at higher risk?

Pancreatic cancer can occur in anyone, but certain factors increase risk. Age – over 50 years, smoking (strongest risk factor), diabetes, obesity, sedentary lifestyle, chronic pancreatitis and family history of pancreatic or related cancers are risk factors.

People with these risk factors should be especially alert to symptoms and seek medical advice early.

Treatment and outcome

While pancreatic cancer is a serious disease, it is not always untreatable. Outcome depends on stage at diagnosis, overall health of the person and access to specialised care.

When detected early, surgery combined with modern chemotherapy offers long-term survival and, in some cases, cure. Even in advanced stages, treatment can significantly improve quality of life and control symptoms.

Surgery plays a crucial role in pancreatic cancer - but only for some. It requires careful evaluation and expertise. Pancreatic surgery is complex and should ideally be performed in experienced centres with a multi-disciplinary team comprising surgical and medical oncologists, gastroenterologist, radiologist and supportive care specialists. Proper staging and treatment planning ensure patients receive the most appropriate and safest care.

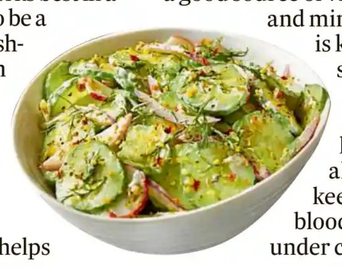
SUYUG Infra engineers 'Best Homes in the Galaxy'

SUYUG Infra is redefining luxury in Bengaluru with 'Best Homes in the Galaxy', a claim backed by their viral UFO-themed campaign that clocked over four million views. Beyond the buzz, they offer rare 'responsible luxury' - their projects hold IGBC Silver pre-certifications, a distinction held by less than one per cent of Bengaluru developments. Combining MIVAN technology with 82 per cent open spaces, SUYUG is setting an elite, sustainable benchmark.

Rooted in over three decades of leadership experience and a portfolio spanning 2.50 million sqft under development, SUYUG Infra has emerged as a cornerstone of reliability in Bengaluru's high-growth corridors.

Veggie for the warm days

As the days begin to get warmer, make cucumber a part of your daily diet. While it works best in a salad, it can also be a part of many dishes. You can even make cucumber slices a snack between meals.



Cucumber is a hydrating vegetable that helps replenish the lost hydration in the warm days. A nutrient-dense vegetable, it is a good source of vitamins and minerals. It is known to support bone and skin health. It also helps keep your blood pressure under check.

Delay in child's neurodevelopment must be addressed early

At the **Gunasheela Hospitals**, parents receive guidance on milestone tracking, early stimulation techniques and essential do's and don'ts, along with a follow-up plan tailored to the baby's risk profile, explain **Dr Devika Gunasheela,** Managing Director, Gunasheela Fertility Centre and **Dr Prafulla Srinivas**, Consultant Neurodevelopmental Paediatrician, Gunasheela Axon Child Development Centre

The human brain is born remarkably immature. Unlike most species, a baby's nervous system continues to develop intensively for years after birth, making early caregiving, stimulation and medical guidance central to long-term outcomes.

Gunasheela Axon Child Development Centre

Age 0-3 crucial in neurodevelopment process

At birth, only about 25 per cent of brain development is complete. By three years of age, the brain reaches nearly 75 per cent development, and by six years, close to 90 per cent. This makes the first three years the most decisive phase in a child's neurodevelopmental journey.

Despite this, early warning signs are frequently missed. Parents are often advised to 'wait and watch' when a child shows delays in speech, movement or behaviour. This reassurance can lead to lost time. Most foundational milestones are expected by the age of three. If delays are not recognised during this window, the opportunity to intervene is lost when the brain is at its most plastic and responsive phase.

Milestone tracking at Gunasheela Centre ensures early intervention

At Gunasheela Axon Child Development Centre, milestone tracking is approached as a structured, ongoing process, not a one-time check. It extends beyond walking and talking to include how a child plays, communicates, focuses, responds to instructions, regulates emotions and interacts socially. Common concerns seen at Gunasheela Axon Child Development Centre include speech delay, excessive gadget exposure, poor play skills, limited peer interaction, coordination difficulties, hyperactivity, behavioural challenges such as hitting or biting, and atypical behaviours like hand flapping or sensory sensitivity.

GUNASHEELA AXON CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

What distinguishes the approach at Gunasheela Axon Child Development Centre is early detection combined with multi-disciplinary intervention. Here, neurodevelopmental paediatricians, therapists and counsellors work together to assess and support each child, while also training parents to continue interventions at home.

Neurodevelopmental care should be viewed as preventive healthcare. Every child benefits from structured monitoring, not only those with obvious developmental concerns.

Guidance for parents

When developmental delays go unrecognised, they impact how a child learns, processes information and solves problems across domains such as speech, motor skills and cognition, often leading to frustration and challenging behaviours later.

Milestones parents should track

2 months: Smiling back at parents
3 months: Reaches out for or tries to catch attractive things
3 months: Vocalises by cooing
4 months: Neck holding
8 months: Independent sitting
9 months: Waves bye bye, babbling, responds to name call
12 months: One independent step and one meaningful word
24 months: Two-word sentences (example, amma give), run, climb stairs

With timely assessments and early intervention, children have the best chance to do well.

Show Buzz | Khushi Mukherjee

'I am focused on exploring lead roles as a solo heroine...'

An actor and emerging pop-culture personality who has built a strong and evolving presence across regional cinema, OTT platforms and social media. With work spanning Tamil and Telugu films, Khushi Mukherjee has steadily transitioned into a multi-format talent who combines performance, digital influence and creative entrepreneurship. She wins hearts through her distinctive sense of style, expressive on-screen presence and ability to connect with young audiences.

Shilpi Madan caught up with her for this chat.

How has your journey been in the world of glamour?
My journey in the industry has been full of challenges, but I have always tried to rise above them with resilience and hard work. I've given my heart, sweat and dedication to my craft, even during moments when the obstacles felt overwhelming. I've faced situations that made me question my place in the industry. I dealt with the uncertainties that come with building your own opportunities. Still, I have continued to stand strong for my truth and career.

How has working in south Indian movies been?
My experience in south Indian cinema has been particularly rewarding. Working on Kannada projects gave me some of my best memories, with comfortable and creatively fulfilling shoots. Collaborating with Puri Jagannadh was especially inspiring - he is truly one of the most grounded and humble directors I've had the privilege to work with.

A skill you've picked up recently during a shoot...
I've trained in theatre, mono acting, dancing and martial arts. These disciplines have built my confidence as an artist and help me bring more depth to my performances.

Movies or OTT?
At this stage in my career, I am focused on exploring lead roles as a solo heroine in films backed by respected directors and strong star casts. I believe both movies and OTT platforms offer great opportunities when the role is powerful and creatively fulfilling.

How vital is social media for an artiste?
Social media often demands a filtered version of reality. Many people feel pressured to present a perfect life online. But I've realised authenticity matters more. I don't want to be another person pretending everything is fine - I want to be true to myself, even if that means fewer followers and more honesty.

A turning point in your career...
Sometimes it felt like the industry was competitive to the point of being cut-throat. But I hold on to one golden rule - never give up and never compromise on your integrity. Even when I felt I had to restart despite knowing I am lead material, I chose to keep going with self-respect and dignity.

A golden rule in life...
I refuse to trade my values for short-cuts or empty promises. My journey will always be built on hard work, talent and self-respect.

What's your fitness routine?
Diet and hypnotherapy form the base of my lifestyle right now. I focus on wellness, balance and routines that help me stay mentally and physically centred.

Your beauty routine?
Cleansing, toning, serum, under-eye serum, sleep mask, sunscreen, and when required, Botox and fillers. Consistency is key for me.

What's next?
I'm choosing to believe in my growth, my potential and the story I have yet to write. Maybe someday it becomes a book or a film, but on my own terms - a story of strength, resilience and evolution.

A pearl of wisdom for those who want to be in your shoes?
Never assume you understand someone's life without walking their journey. I've faced storms many don't see, but I believe time changes, and I am meant to shine in my own way.

Amadeus: When genius becomes a personal wound

Before the idea of the tortured genius hardened into a cliche, there was Amadeus - a play that asks a far more unsettling question - what does it mean to stand inches away from greatness and know it will never be yours?

Next week, the Prestige Centre for Performing Arts (PCPA) premieres Amadeus, directed by acclaimed actor and director Arjun Sajnani, in a new Indian staging of Peter Shaffer's theatrical work on the life of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and his contemporary, Antonio Salieri. The staging brings to life a story where music, faith, envy and obsession collide.

At its heart, Amadeus is Salieri's confession - a man of discipline and faith who believes he has been mocked by God through Mozart's effortless genius. As Mozart's music flows with irrepressible ease, Salieri becomes convinced he has hastened his rival's fall. Unguarded and unwilling to conform, Mozart's vulnerability slowly gives way to loneliness, revealing the cost of genius in an unforgiving world.

Director Arjun Sajnani describes Amadeus as a labour of love - for Peter Shaffer's writing, for Mozart's music and for the emotional depths the play continues to uncover in him. For Sajnani, the script offers everything theatre demands - drama, mystery, sensuality and fierce rivalry - ultimately leading to a deeper understanding of the human condition. His staging allows the language and music to drive the imagery and emotional weight of the production.

Shaffer's play moves beyond biography into moral reckoning. Themes of love, jealousy, ambition and wounded faith run through the drama, heightened by Mozart's operatic and orchestral works. Genius and mediocrity collide as Salieri's pleas to God go unanswered, even as Mozart continues to create masterpiece after masterpiece.

"It feels fitting for Amadeus to find a home at PCPA," says Dipti Rao. "We're looking forward to seeing this adaptation realised by some of Bengaluru's most accomplished theatre actors."

The production is led by Vivek Madan as Antonio Salieri and Darius Sunawala as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. The cast also includes Satvik Sampath Kumar and Zainab Aliya Hameed as the Venticelli, Akshara Kerekoppa as Johann von Strack, Param Vir Bedi as Orsini-Rosenberg, Bobbie H Kalra as Baron van Swieten, Susan George as Constanze Weber and Shivam Vig as Emperor Joseph II. Music consultancy is by Evelyn Kelton, with lighting and production design by Pradeep Belawadi and audio-visual design by Clay Kelton.

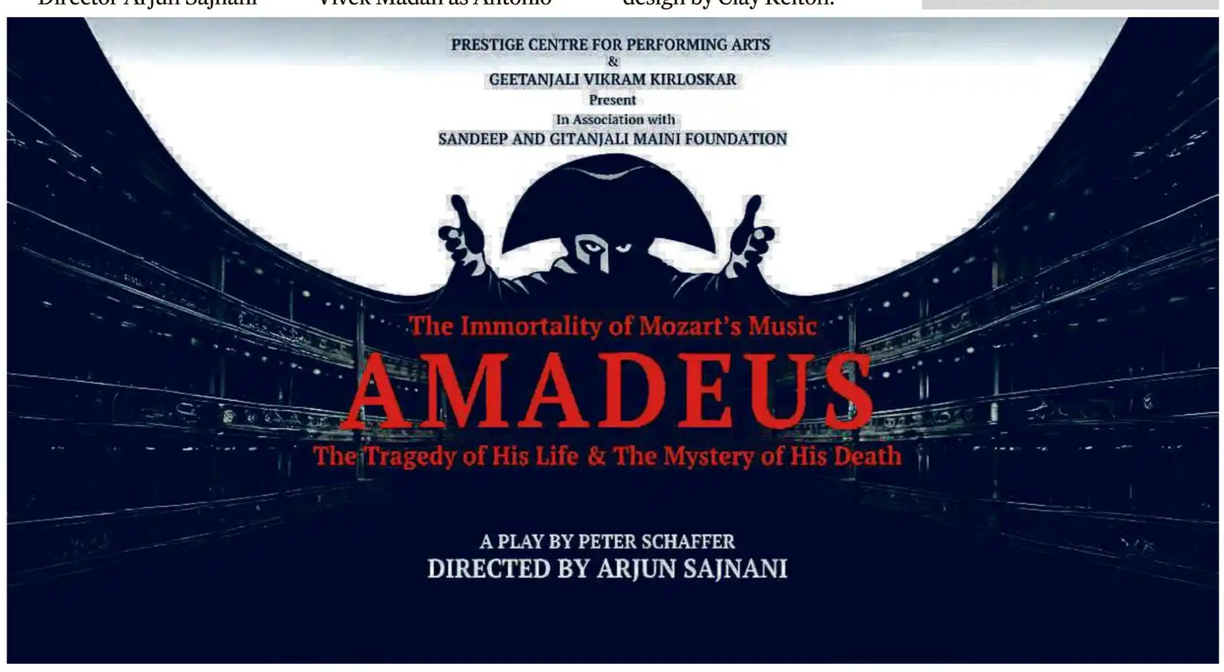
Arjun Sajnani

First staged in 1979, Amadeus remains strikingly relevant. In an age obsessed with talent and recognition, the play exposes the quiet violence of envy and the loneliness of witnessing genius from the shadows.

Date and time:
Saturday February 21 - 7 pm
Sunday February 22 - 5 pm

Venue:
Prestige Centre for Performing Arts

For details call:
99001 51383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AMADEUS
The Tragedy of His Life & The Mystery of His Death
A PLAY BY PETER SCHAFFER
DIRECTED BY ARJUN SAJNANI

DH DECCAN HERALD
Wknd. V DAY
WEEKEND LIFESTYLE FEATURE

IT'S NOT ABOUT PRICE

The price of a gift doesn't make it the best one. A gift with a personal touch is far better than one that is expensive but impersonal. A handwritten letter, collage of old photos that bring back memories or a weekend holiday package may be better than an expensive gift that is only of aesthetic value.

Personalise a gift with the person's name on it. The gesture shows how much you care

GIFT BOX

GO BY NEED

A gift that's used is always better than one that gathers dust in a cupboard. So, this special day, gift something the person needs or will use in the future such as a fitness tracker or even a gym membership. A workstation accessory is a good idea too.

Ikyatha Yerasala has some ideas for a unique date that helps you spend some quality time interacting and getting to know each other better

Date with a difference

Dinner and a movie have had a good run. But in a city that's layered with history, subcultures and hidden corners, dates don't have to revolve around a table or a screen. The most memorable connections often happen when you're indulging in a fun activity, while you laugh, converse, learn and connect.

From museum visits to having a ball in a gaming arcade to going on heritage walks, Bengalureans are indulging in various thrilling activities on a date. Here are some unique date outings for Valentine's Day.

For Tejas Kinger, founding member of an AI start-up, "My partner isn't from Bengaluru, but she clearly loves the city. So, we did a few unique dates through which she got to know the city. We went for walks around all the heritage buildings on M G Road, Brigade Road, Church Street, Commercial Street, and in Cubbon Park. We went on a bookstore tour of the city where we walked or drove and covered every single major bookstore in the city. We also went on 'thindi walks' as a way to discover the nuances of food in the city".

Another exciting date idea is museum hopping. Ayush Pranav, who works at a venture capital firm, says, "Museum dates are underrated. What I like about them is that they don't follow the usual dating script. On a movie date, you barely talk. On a dinner date, you end up covering the same basics. A museum changes that. You're surrounded by art and objects, so the conversation starts naturally. You talk about what you're seeing, what you like, what you don't, and that slowly tells you a lot about how the other person thinks. It feels more spontaneous and less forced".

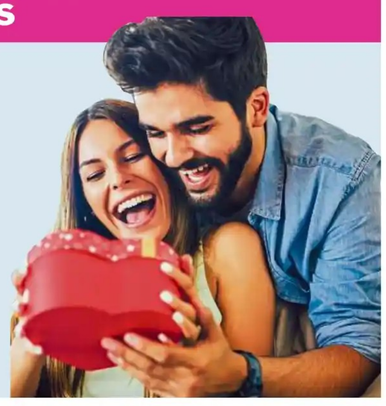
Tejas strongly feels there's a certain intimacy in sharing everything he's grown up with. "The joy of introducing it to someone is so difficult to quantify", he says.

Gaming arcades, food walks and picnics in parks are great ideas for a fun date too. "When you go on a date that includes an activity, you get to know your partner in a better way. On our first date, we went street hopping trying different kinds of food. On our second date, I sent him an itinerary for the day and we had a picnic at Cubbon Park and did some bird watching too. We then walked towards Church Street and played games at an arcade. We got competitive and were fighting to win! It's a fun way to explore the city. We've also gone on thindi walks together. Going to lakes in the city is something that we enjoy too", reveals public health researcher Rashi Nandwani.

Unique dates are proof that the best way to get to know someone isn't across a table - but beside them, in motion and discovering something new together.

Are you looking for a memorable last-minute gift for someone special? Deepa Natarajan Lobo has some ideas

Gift that makes a memory



It's Valentine's Day and if you have run out of time to pick something unique for your loved one, worry not! You will not be the only one. Every year, February 14 seems to arrive all of a sudden, leaving everyone scrambling for gifting ideas at the eleventh hour.

While it's tempting to grab the usual flowers or chocolates, even last-minute gifts can be innovative and personalised. They don't require weeks of planning - just a bit of thought. After all, aren't the best gifts ones that settle into the daily humdrum of life and yet make you feel special when you use them?

Here are a few picks that are truly out of the box

Scented diary

Go for a diary or journal with a cosy hint of cocoa, biscuit or caramel! Even a wintery cinnamon or summer berry works well this season. While the scent may fade over time, the pages filled with half-finished lists or quick doodles turns into a personal little keepsake, that can be used every day.

Analog photo prints

With any photo just a click away on the phone, holding a physical copy of a memorable moment feels almost unreal. Pick a few such times you love and print them on textured paper. If you don't have the time to get a fancy frame, no worries! Slip them into a book that your partner is reading or tuck them away into a drawer.

The real surprise is finding them again later, hiding in a place you forgot.

Coffee accessory

Who doesn't love a steaming cup of coffee in the mornings? Sometimes, all it takes is a simple coffee infuser, matcha bowl or pour-over coffee cone to start a new ritual. It invites you to linger for a minute longer, talk a little more or just sit in comfortable silence before you begin your daily rush.

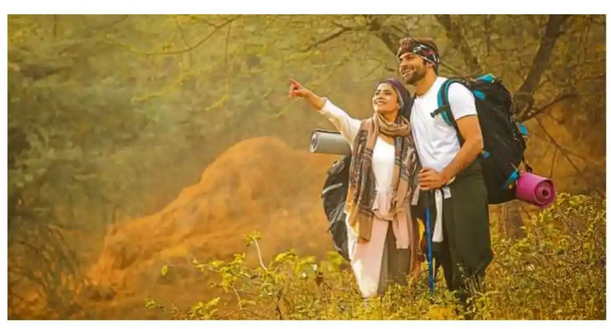
Studio session

Bonding over a cooking, pottery or art session can be extremely therapeutic - for your relationship and mental health. After all, you forget all those notifications on the phone for a while and use your hands to craft something new and creative.

Even if you decide on it at the last minute, there are plenty of studios that offer quick workshops or walk-in spots for you to have a truly memorable Valentine's Day.

Live experience

Is your spouse a music-lover or finds joy in the mountains? Then tickets to a concert, a play, stand-up comedy show or pre-booked trek can be a thoughtful gesture that can leave you both with lasting memories.



LEISURE

Beetle Bailey

I CAN TALK TO YOU BUT YOU CAN'T TALK TO ME
GREG + MORT WALKER
WOOF! WOOF! WOOF!
I AGREE. THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE CAN'T COMMUNICATE
OTTO
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119

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

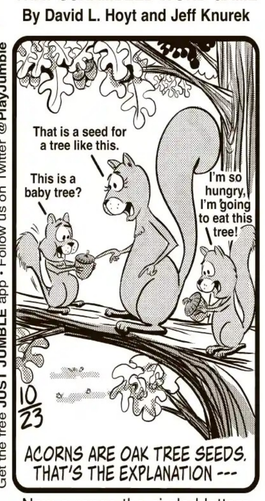
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

TISUE

NIHYS

BPCUIL

GOLANO


That is a seed for a tree like this.
This is a baby tree?
I'm so hungry, I'm going to eat this tree!
10 23
ACORNS ARE OAK TREE SEEDS. THAT'S THE EXPLANATION ---

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answers

Acorns are oak tree seeds. That's the explanation — IN A NUTSHELL

SUITE SHINY PUBLIC LAGOON

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HITORI-133

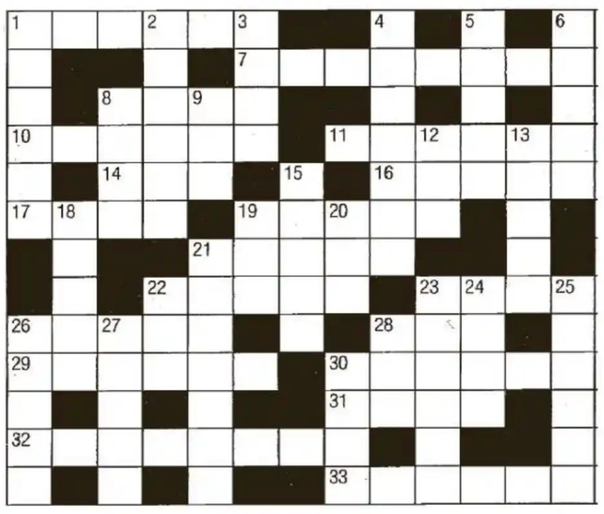
6	1	5	4	3	2	7	5
5	6	4	7	8	3	3	1
7	1	2	3	5	4	1	6
6	2	4	1	1	8	5	3
8	4	3	5	4	1	4	7
2	4	1	6	1	3	7	8
3	3	6	1	1	7	4	1
3	3	5	8	7	1	6	4

SOLUTION for HITORI-133

4	6	■	7	8	5	3	■
■	4	7	1	■	6	■	3
8	7	3	■	6	1	4	2
7	■	1	4	5	3	■	8
3	5	8	■	1	■	2	6
6	1	4	5	2	3	■	7
1	3	■	8	7	4	6	5
5	■	2	■	4	3	1	■

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 134



EASY

ACROSS
1 Brigand (6)
7 Journalist (8)
8 Renown (4)
10 Waterproof jacket (6)
11 Stretch tight (6)
14 Aged (3)
16 Noisy and disorderly (5)
17 Whirlpool (4)
19 Lukewarm (5)
21 Ramshackle dwelling (5)
22 Warning device (5)
23 Uneven walk (4)
26 Writing material (5)
28 Spider's trap (3)
29 Nab (6)
30 Cease (6)
31 Man's name (4)
32 Pullovers (8)
33 Hamper (6)

DOWN
1 Colourless gas (6)
2 Very much (6)
3 Long journey (4)
4 Nasal opening (7)
5 Drinking tube (5)
6 Intimate friend (5)
8 Edibles (4)
9 Angry (3)
12 Stick (3)
13 Parlance (5)
15 Cant (5)
18 Prohibit (5)
19 Hill (3)
20 Female swan (3)
21 Hairy (7)
22 View (3)
23 Injury, wound (6)
24 Wading bird (4)
25 Golf club (6)
26 Stop briefly (5)
27 Clean feathers (5)
28 Not dry (3)
30 Money (4)

CRYPTIC

ACROSS
1 Went different ways with soft tread, perhaps (6)
7 Battle for the high ground on the border (8)
8 Food and a good massage (4)
10 Writer of a letter in sport, mischievously? (6)
11 He doesn't tell terrible lies (6)
14 Call for a skill that's not bad (3)
16 A loop or ring through the nose! (5)
17 Test the breath of a flier (4)
19 Relatively matrimonial! (2,3)
21 Guide or prophet out to start trouble (5)
22 Surrounded by swarming bees, I leave it (5)
23 They can stop you going straight along the coast (4)
26 The hoarder of Reims? (5)
28 An absorbing and refreshing thing to do (3)
29 An eighth of the music (6)
30 Very well, it's noisy in the city (6)
31 Beastly cross by the end of the story! (4)
32 Because of this, comparatively little is heard (8)
33 Paintings by Claude (6)

DOWN
1 Gun dogs? (3-3)
2 Air traveller possibly hurt by a bit of a crash (6)
3 Is it initially due to a misplaced bet? (4)
4 Study group formed by marines (7)
5 Dance of an uncertain period (5)
6 College girl (5)
8 Billy got out, with heavy heart (4)
9 Water needed for us to finish work (3)
12 Look humble, not stern (3)
13 A shot at writing (5)
15 Where dancing's concerned, they're possibly up to Mrs Brown (5)
18 An eye for a drink? (5)
19 'Tis indeed part of Whitsuntide (3)
20 Allowed to be occupied (3)
21 The humble person set out to get right to the fore (7)
22 To complete her name takes a mere trice (3)
23 John, whose hair-style took any form (6)
24 Some chaps no longer at the top (4)
25 It's pointedly involved in the tracking of certain records (6)
26 Small animal of use to a medical person (5)
27 Being inactive makes a good person bad! (5)
28 His pupils wouldn't miss him (3)
30 Make for Maidenhead (4)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 134

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 1, P-arted 7, Edge-hill 8, G-rub 10, Pro-u-st 11, Fibber 14, Ask 16, No-O-se 17, MOT-h 19, In law 21, S-t-eer 22, Bese-t 23, Bays 26, Miser 28, Sup 29, Octave 30, F-in-Ely 31, Ory-X 32, Silencer 33, Monets.
DOWN: 1, Pom-pom 2, Thru-sh 3, D-ebt 4, Seminar 5, Limbo 6, Clare 8, Go-a-t 9, Us-k 12, Bow 13, Essay 15, Knees 18, Optic 19, Its 20, Let 21, Se-R-van-t 22, Bea(-trice) 23, Bun-yan 24, Ap-ex 25, Stylus 26, MO-use 27, St.-ill 28, Sir 30, For-M. 26, Pause 27, Preen 28, Wet 30, Dosh.

EASY
ACROSS: 1, Bandit 7, Reporter 8, Fame 10, Anorak 11, Strain 14, Old 16, Rowdy 17, Eddy 19, Tepid 21, Hovel 22, Siren 23, Limp 26, Paper 28, Web 29, Arrest 30, Desist 31, Otis 32, Sweaters 33, Hinder.
DOWN: 1, Butane 2, Dearly 3, Trek 4, Nostril 5, Straw 6, Crony 8, Food 9, Mad 12, Rod 13, Idiom 15, Bevel 18, Debar 19, Tor 20, Pen 21, Hirsute 22, See 23, Lesion 24, Ibis 25, Putter 26, Pause 27, Preen 28, Wet 30, Dosh.

DH DECCAN HERALD
Wknd. FASHION

Eat a variety of fruits rather than just one or two as each fruit is rich in different nutrients

EAT RIGHT

WEEKEND LIFESTYLE FEATURE

FRUIT AND YOGURT

This is a good combo, especially in case of fruits that are high in natural sugar content. Blend or cut the fruit into small pieces and mix in yogurt. You can even include nuts and seeds to make a healthy snack. The nuts and seeds help slow down the sugar absorption. Avoid adding sugar.

HYDRATE WITH COCONUT WATER

As the days get warmer, you need more hydration. More so if you are outdoors through the day or exercising vigorously. Along with water, include tender coconut water daily. Coconut water contains electrolytes and replenishes what you lose effectively. Go for natural coconut water and refrain from sweetening it with sugar.

Fruit Full

Season for fruits

Spring is a great time for fruits. This is the time when fresh crops of fruits come into the markets. They are rich in nutrition and at their tastiest. The prices are at a low and there's a huge variety in fruits to choose from now. This is the best time to incorporate fruits in your daily diet if you haven't done so.

Immunity boost

This is a season for colds and infections. You need an immunity boost. Citrus fruits, rich in Vitamin C, need to be a part of your daily diet. Choose from mosambi, orange, grape and lemon. It is advisable to eat the whole fruit as you get the fibre content too. The fibre helps digestion and keeps a check on blood sugar levels.

BERRY NICE

Stop at a traffic light and they come up to you selling strawberries. This is a good time to include strawberries in your diet plan. This fruit is rich in Vitamin C and also has antioxidant properties. It is a versatile fruit that can be eaten raw or with yogurt. It can be added to many desserts too.

PINEAPPLE PUNCH

This fruit is known for its medicinal properties. It contains bromelain, an enzyme that supports digestion. Pineapple is rich in Vitamin C, manganese and fibre. It boosts immunity and also strengthens digestion. For best effect, eat freshly-cut slices after meals. Pineapple dipped in sugar syrup is avoidable.

Apple a day...

Who hasn't heard it before? Apple is nutrition-rich and has quercetin, a powerful antioxidant. This fruit is known to support heart health and aid in weight management. Don't discard the skin. The fibre and antioxidant properties are in its skin. Wash well in warm water before eating apples.

Healing hues

Vegetable dyeing gives garments a healing touch and slice of history, writes **Prasad Bidapa**

Fashion Forward

In the silent corridors of the National Museum, a fragment of madder-dyed cotton from the Indus Valley Civilization whispers a 5,000-year-old secret - India has always known the alchemy of colour. From the geometric precision of Ajrakh, whose trefoil motifs were famously worn by the Priest-King of Mohenjo-Daro, to the vibrant block prints of the Medieval era, our textile history is etched in the sap of trees and the rust of iron.

Today, this ancient wisdom is evolving into a sophisticated science often termed Ayurvastra. This isn't merely dyeing - it is a 'healing medicinal treatment' of fabric. When a textile is infused with Indigo (Indigofera Tinctoria), it does more than turn blue - it acts as a wearable antiseptic, soothing the skin and regulating body temperature. Madder (Rubia Cordifolia or Manjistha), the source of our deepest reds, is prized in Ayurveda for its anti-inflammatory and detoxifying properties.

The palette extends far beyond the primary. Artisans today use 'unusual' ingredients such as fermented iron scraps and jaggery to produce black or pomegranate rinds for shimmering golds. These myriad tints are the result of a laborious, ritualistic process that synthetic dyes can never replicate.

In Assam, masters such as Narottam Das keep the delicate secrets of natural fibres alive, while artisans such as Ram Kishore Derewala from Rajasthan have elevated block printing to a high art form, proving that the human hand possesses a precision that no machine can mimic.

Path to conscious luxury

Vegetable dyeing has the potential to become India's premier luxury export. In an era of 'fast fashion' fatigue, the industry must be repositioned as the pinnacle of conscious fashion. By investing these textiles with an aura of glamour and exclusivity, it's possible to transition them from 'craft' to 'couture'.

To upscale this industry, a dual effort is required. Designers must bridge the gap between tradition and modernity, using these organic palettes for contemporary silhouettes that appeal to global audiences. The government must provide the infrastructure for mass-scale organic cultivation of dye plants and establish certification standards to prevent 'greenwashing'.

Developing this technique on a massive scale isn't just about aesthetics - it's about energising a rural economy. By empowering our artisans to produce at volume without compromising the 'slow soul' of the craft, we can turn India into the world's hub for sustainable luxury - where every garment is a dose of wellness and a piece of history.

Get the layers right

Warm days and nippy evenings can challenge your wardrobe. **Shilpi Madan** has some advice

Some handy hints

- Go for lengths in shrugs to create depth. A short singlet with a long shirt works well. Not vice versa.
- Skip the massive handbags that look like suitcases.
- Opt for minimalism in colours, silhouettes and accessories for a clean appearance.

Style File

Foxed by the sudden dips and swings in the temperature? Sometimes it's hot, sometimes breezy and sometimes nippy. Here's your handy guide on how to crack the comfort code with the ups and downs in the weather and stay happy and cosy.

Comfort is the key

While sweat wicking materials work well for exercise sessions, wearing a synthetic singlet throughout the day can leave you feeling a little uncomfortable. Make way for cottons and linens for inner wear.

Light and slight

Chunky knits, and thickly collared shirts in corduroy leave you looking a bit over-fed. Skim the bulky fits with more streamlined cuts in a denim shirt or a cotton jacket that you can slip on or off on when it turns nippy.

Palette choice

It becomes easier to mix and match when you choose a neutral base with colours in tan, mocha, sandy hues, sage, powder pinks, pastel blues and light yellows and lilacs. Nothing succeeds like white in creating a crisp appearance.

Skip the chunk

Dangling earrings, huge rings and thick bracelets add to the bulk. Lightweight jewellery, delicate pendants, slim wrist pieces and elegant studs compose the layered look with elan.

Tailored cuts

Vertical lines, plain shoes and light colours create a visual impression of length and height. Play up the tones in the earthy palette with slip-on shrugs and shirts, front zip cotton jackets as opposed to thick hoodies, and form-fitting cuts for a flattering look.

Bring home the spring

Some bits and bobs of happy colours, and light textures, give your home a touch of the season's cheer. **Shilpi Madan** offers some tips

Spring Refresh

Winter is on its way out and what better way to reset your rhythm for the New Year than welcoming the season of sunshine and flowers? Here are some quick tips to weave in the joy.

Go floral

Tiny flowers dotting your home linen and dinnerware to fresh flowers nodding in vases to blooms on blinds and bells rev up the mood of your home decor easily. Make way for terrariums, potted plants on the window sill and blooms on pillows, cushion covers and throws.
A fresh sprig in the bathroom lightens the decor too.

Texture play

Move aside the heavy, welcome the light-footed. Make way for rattan and wicker. Celebrate the airy, fresh feeling and bring in the wood accents and terracotta for a natural touch. A mix of three textures and finishes sets the tone for an instant uplift.

Colourful in decor

Infuse plenty of earthy hues in seaweed, camel and sandy tones. Soft pastels in light yellow, pistachio greens, powder blues, baby pinks and ivory beige underline a refreshing element in the decor of your home. Make use of glass curios and botanicals to brighten up spaces.

Scent trail

Make the air speak for itself. Move aside the warmer scents such as cinnamon and bring in vivacious, lighter, happier floral room fragrances and fresheners in lime and green apple. The effervescence spills its own energy into your spaces, lending them a welcoming vibe.

Calls for change

Bring in one new element - whether it is an antique mirror on the wall in the lobby, an artwork ruling a wall or even flowing curtains to celebrate the sunshine and breeze. A focal point allows you to centre the complexion of the rest of the decor around it.

DH DECCAN HERALD
Wknd. VARIETY

Attire makes a difference. A formal attire with accessories keeps you in a business mood through the day

HIGH ALERT

WEEKEND LIFESTYLE FEATURE

SLEEP WITH A PLAN

Every night, go to bed with a plan drawn up for the next day. Prepare a tentative schedule for the day including some fun activity such as catching up with a friend after work or some quick shopping near home. It could even be a call to greet an old friend on his/her birthday.

TOUGH THINGS FIRST

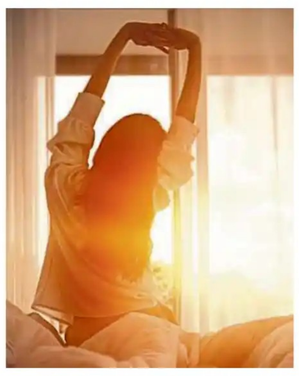
Get over that difficult meeting or high-pressure presentation to a client in the first half of the day if possible. Once the stressful tasks are over, you will have a better day ahead. Else, you will remain keyed up through the day. Treat yourself to a five-minute break after every stressful task or meeting.

Move On

Spring up

The winter is almost over and spring is moving in. There's no excuse to ignore the morning alarm for that little extra snooze under the blanket. If you're still finding it difficult to spring out of bed at the first ring of the alarm and get on with a high-energy morning, here are some handy tips.

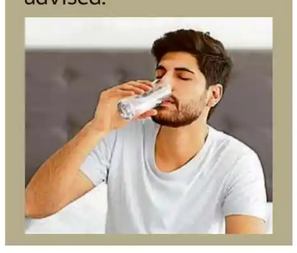
SOME MOVEMENT HELPS



Begin your morning with some movement. It helps beat lethargy. Even a few minutes of stretching or walking just as you get out of bed helps. Think of all that you have planned for the day as you move. It helps you get out of the sleep mode and into your day with a spring in your step.

WATER FIRST

Make water your first fluid intake of the day. A large glass of water before the caffeine kick helps get your joints moving. It rehydrates your joints and muscles, and helps you 'wake up. Infuse your water with herbs for better effect. Chilled water isn't advised.

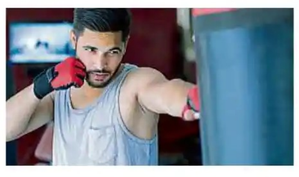


Simple yoga

Yoga stretches confer all-round benefits. Some poses for the back and joints help you begin the day on a fit note. Check with a yoga therapist first for some asanas that will help you. Also check if you need some warm-up before you practice the asanas.

MORNING WORK-OUTS

There's nothing like a morning gym routine to get you out of bed and moving at the first ring of the alarm. Get into the habit and you will find a difference in two weeks. The thought of the day's work-outs and meeting your gym buddies is motivating enough to get you springing out of bed. Morning work-outs keep you high on energy through the day.



Dive into water work-outs

It is easy on the joints and has a fun element. **Deepa Natarajan Lobo** explains how exercising in water works for you

Fitness Funda

Over the years, water has evolved into a powerful arena for any form of exercise. Gone are the days when water was meant only for traditional swimming or aqua sports. Today, fitness enthusiasts love heading to the pool for energetic, music-driven work-out sessions, which blend oodles of fun with some serious health perks.

From community pools to wellness centres, aqua fitness is redefining exercise by bringing movement into water, offering low-impact work-outs that suit all ages and abilities. What was once limited to swimming laps or rehabilitation has now evolved into joyful, music-led and functional formats.

"Anything related to water is relaxing because of its buoyancy. This feeling cuts across all forms of aqua fitness and is contributing towards the popularity of water workouts," says Vijeta Singh, an aqua Zumba expert.

Here are some popular aqua work-outs making waves:

Aqua Aerobics

A classic with the resistance of water, aqua aerobics involves knee lifts and arm swings that make for a great cardio, without your joints taking a beating. Dr Palak Dengla, a physiotherapist, points out, "Many people use aqua aerobics to build muscle while losing body fat. Water work-outs have become preferred methods to achieve results."

Aqua Zumba

It's truly a dance party in the pool with music, movement and plenty of fun guaranteed!

Vijeta says, "Add music, add movement and the entire session becomes so joyful and intense that you don't even notice how hard you're working. The best part? Even non-swimmers can do it. We usually work in four-feet-deep pools, where your head and chest stay above water. So, one doesn't need to know how to swim".

Water Jogging

If you're a runner dealing with knee pain or sit at a desk all day, water jogging is the perfect work-out for you. You get your cardio fix, and your joints remain safe.

"Running creates knee pressure which equals three times your body weight, but water running lets you exercise without this danger while maintaining the same heart health and burning 450 calories per hour through natural resistance. This is as an ideal solution for India's office workers who face joints pain starting from their 30s," says Dr Dengla.

Aqua HIIT

High-intensity interval training (HIIT) too has gone aquatic. Short bursts of fast movements followed by recovery periods make Aqua HIIT both challenging and joints-friendly. "Think of a jump on the floor and compare it to jumping in water! It's much slower due to the resistance of water and jumping on land is harsh, but jumping in water slows you down. You're still working hard, just safer," points out Vijeta.

Aqua yoga, physiotherapy and Pilates

If you're after something more gentle, aqua yoga and Pilates bring mindfulness and buoyancy into play. Aqua yoga is all about flexibility and breath, while Pilates in the pool targets your core, usually with some floating gear for safety.

Physiotherapists too are turning to water therapy to help patients recover from surgery and chronic pain. Dr Dengla is quick to add that while water workouts can't boost bone density like regular land exercises, mixing both gives you the best of both worlds.

Making a splash

Why more people are diving into aqua work-outs

- Cardio with zero impact
- Fun group activity for workplaces
- Easy on knees and joints
- Good for all ages
- Upbeat, music-driven classes
- Safe choice during pregnancy
- No swimming skills needed
- Builds muscle due to water resistance

Choosing calm over chaos

Many people are choosing to live slower with far less stimulation. Ikyatha Yerasala looks at the trend

Life Style

Social media, bustling malls or noisy social gatherings - these could be exciting for many, but for those who prefer the low stimulation life, these are anything but entertaining. From sitting in silent cafes to going off social media to chilling at home in the evenings, more people are choosing to live slower and with far less stimulation.

"I am trying to lead a low stimulation life. I have cut down my phone usage by 25 per cent. I'm focussing on health, well-being and trying to follow the Circadian rhythm. Cutting down my phone usage has given me a lot more time to do things around the house like gardening. I have also started reading a lot more and journalling. I also go for walks without music or podcasts for the first 20 minutes so that I get to see and hear things around me", says legal consultant Gowri Advani. The slow and quiet life has made her more mindful and less reactive.

For many, this shift didn't happen overnight - it emerged slowly with time. Soft skills trainer Siddhi Jain reveals, "I realised I have become someone who likes to keep it low. I've shopped in crowded areas. Now, I shop online. Last week, my husband asked me if I wanted to go to a mall for the sale, but I saw the crowd and decided not to go. Of late, crowds and loud noise bother me. I prefer to go to places like parks or lakes instead. I skip eating at a place if there's a long queue. As someone who couldn't keep quiet for even a minute, I now choose silence while traveling, be it a cab, Metro or bus. I like doing nothing at all - not even scrolling or listening to music".

Many who used to spend their life sprinting through the day with choc-a-bloc schedules have realised the perks of a low-key life. "I felt I had to be 'in the know' - tuned in to everything, attending every party and never missing a news story. But then, I decided to just switch off and trade that chaos for the quiet. There is a profound clarity that comes with intentionally dialling down the noise. I've traded digital dopamine for the rhythm of a long run, a swim or a simple morning walk. I now prioritise the depth of a one-on-one conversation and the focused joy of playing a board game with my daughter", shares entrepreneur Neelam Shekhawat. She no longer feels the need to be connected to everyone all the time to feel complete. "In fact, I am far more content being 'unplugged'. By switching off, I've cultivated stronger relationships, and most importantly, I've found a life where I immerse myself and understand and enjoy what I do", she adds.

In choosing less stimulation, people aren't withdrawing from life - they're learning how to stay in it.

Salad and cutlet for comfort and nourishment

Clinical dietitian **Jahnavi Bhograj** has a recipe for a wholesome meal that tickles your tastebuds too

Eat Right

When food offers balance, familiarity and comfort, it stops feeling like an 'adjustment' and becomes part of daily life. And that, more than any rule, is what makes healthy eating sustainable. A balanced meal can be simple to prepare, familiar in taste and still deeply nourishing.

This salad meal with a cutlet is meant to reinforce that idea. The strength of the meal lies in how the plate is put together. A combination of whole grains and legumes provides sustained energy and plant protein. Vegetables add fibre and volume, helping the meal feel filling without excess calories. A moderate amount of fat enhances flavour and supports nutrient absorption, while the crisp cutlet adds texture and familiarity making the meal enjoyable rather than restrictive.

What you need

- One cup each of cooked millets and rajma
- 200 gm of cooked potato
- 40 gm each of carrot and cabbage, both grated
- 30 gm of coriander
- 40 gm of green onion
- Four garlic cloves
- Five green chillies
- One cup of amaranth puffs
- Four tablespoons of mustard oil
- Half a teaspoon of cumin powder
- One teaspoon of black salt
- Salt and pepper to taste

Note: Amaranth puffs act as a textural element rather than a calorie load. Used as a coating instead of refined breadcrumbs, they keep the cutlet light while still adding nutritional value and satiety.

Preparation

Mix all ingredients except the amaranth puffs and mash well. Shape into cutlets, coat with amaranth puffs, and pan-fry in mustard oil until crisp and golden. Serve warm with a fresh garden salad.

What makes this meal work is balance. When fibre, protein and fat are present in the right proportions, even a light meal can feel complete and comforting.

Just get over it!

Shilpi Madan explains how you can take your mind off a habit you want to give up

Mind Full

Roaring ahead with your New Year resolution of shrugging off an addiction? It could be your obsession with energy drinks, cigarettes, tea, sugar, chocolates, coffee or just about any ingestion. How do you cope with the niggling withdrawal symptoms that creep in? Here's your handy guide.

Afternoon slump

That energy drop in the afternoon, especially post-lunch is a challenge. More so if you are used to bringing a cup of tea or coffee to your work desk. Take heart. Streamline the carbohydrates in your mid-day meal and watch the difference. Sound sleep at night is a big help in regularising a yawn-free afternoon.

Walk around

Each time you begin to think of snacking, make the effort to spring to your feet and walk around briskly for a bit. Calling a friend, standing in the sunshine for five minutes while talking makes all the difference. The movement engagement enables you to take your mind off the fixation.

Chew on

Pop in a clove or cardamom to spruce up the taste in your mouth. It revs up the feeling of stagnation instantly, snapping you out of the reverie of obsessing over what you must not reach out for. It is best not to maintain a stock of your fixation at home to prevent easy access.

Mindful alert

A spot of meditation, a session of yoga or Pilates, mindful breathing or even journalling can centre your senses and allow you to anchor your thoughts in a direction you choose. Try it.

Sip on it

Infused water jugs make all the difference. Try fresh mint, lemon grass sprigs, slices of apple or cucumber, cinnamon or lemon to flavour your water intake naturally. You can try chamomile or mint tea to soothe an annoying headache too. Staying well-hydrated works like a charm.

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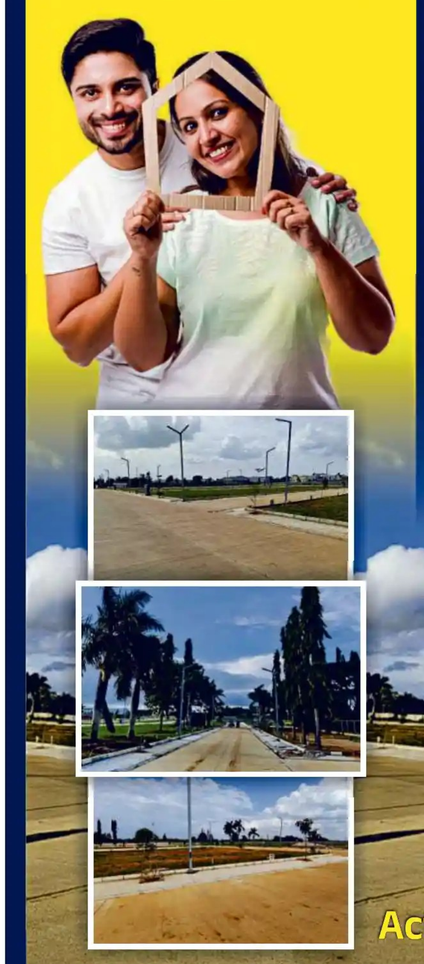

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REAL ESTATE SELLING

Sites

Anjanapura

BDA SITE FOR SALE Anjanapura 9th Block 30×40 & Anjanapura 1st Block 40×60 North Contact: 9845090471

SALE ANJANAPURA 80ft Road 50x80 Commercial Site N/F 40x60 Residential 8th Block Genuine Buyers: 9880776950

Banashankari

BANASHANKARI 6TH STAGE- BDA-AVAILABLE/ WANTED 20x30, 30x40 40x60, 50x80 SITES. BRINDAVAN ASSOCIATES- 9980863245/ 9945333993

40X60, WEST facing site for sale at, Banashankari 6th stage, 4th B Block, call 9844039482

BANASHANKARI 6TH Stage,4th Block 30x40,North Facing 40 Feet Road Near RV Architect College Contact: 8792784772

Hennur

HENNUR 20X45 North West Corner B ekatha site sale HIREMATH LAYOUT, KOTHANUR Rs.8,000/- 9945033366

BTM Layout

5888 SQFT BBMP E Katha S/F Site For Sale in BTM 4th Stage Devarchikanalli Price 11000/Sqft. Owner: 9620374404

SITE FOR Sale 30×40 40×60 East North Facing BTM 2nd Stage 25000 to 30000, 9945377119 /9844099557

Kanakapura Road

GUBBALALA SITE for SALE Jayanagar Housing Society 30x40 East Facing, Good Location. Call: 9341050991. 9740148870.

Kempegowda Layout

NADAPRABHU KEMPEGOWDA LAYOUT BDA SITES SELLING/ BUYING 20x30, 30x40, 40x60, 50x80. Genuine Buyers Call: 9632146784, 9731162167.

SITE 30X40 SF BDA 1Cr 15L Negotiable Nada Prabhu Kempegowda Layout Near 300ft Road Arkavati alternate: 9916826976

KEMPEGOWDA LAYOUT, Commercial/ Residential BDA Site for Sale 20x30, 30x40, 40x60, 50x80 Contact Kumar:- 9945119449

Multiple Locations

BDA SITES AVAILABLE 50x80, 40x60, 30x40, 30x20 in Vishweshwaraiah Layout and Kempegowda Layout. 9900999919.

Manyata Tech Park

SITE FOR Sale 1200 Sft, 15/40 two sites with A Khata, South Facing, Near upcoming Veeranapalya Metro station/ Manyata Tech Park, 5th B Cross, Kaveri Nagar, Bangalore- 560032. 9844509888

Nelamangala

BYRASHETTYHALLI AISHWARYA County BMRDA 40x60, East And Banashankari BDA 30x40,Sites For Sale : 9620117773/9845857006

Vishweshwariah Layout

"VISVESHWARAIAH LAYOUT 6th Block 40x60 South facing Site for sale Good Location Genuine Buyers Contact: 9845500019/ 7019314962"

***40X60 E/F** BDA SITE* SALE VISHWESHWARAIAH LAYOUT BLOCK-1 Behind 100ft Road, Bank loan Available. 9742681666

'DIRECT OWNER' 30x40 WF Vishveswaraiah Layout 2nd Block, Opposite Park Full Developed Area: 8496030007/ 8310885235

Mysore

PRIME PROPERTY LAND AREA 4500 sqft heart of mysore city for sale. Presently running Hotel (lodge) also suitable for jewellery showroom or outlets. 8217724894/ 9448075617.

House

Basavanagudi

SALE OLD House 40x60 West Facing 30ft Road Vishwabharathi Society 2nd Phase Girinagar Basavanagudi: 8880014616

Magadi Road

15X40 G+2 house East Door, South Road, Kaveripura, Kamakshipalya, Magadi Road, A/E Katha, Price 69L Fixed: 9739957911

Nagasandra

3 BHK NEW DUPLEX HOUSE 1342 Sqft North Facing E-Katha 1.10Cr. Chikkbidrakallu Near Tirumalapura Metro Station. 'Srivaari Properties' 9880443362

Flat

Kanakapura Road

3BHK FLATS 2250sqft Sale Fully Teakwood & Fully Italian Marble Independent Floor Rs. 1.55Cr Near DoddKallasandr Metro Station Narayanngr: 9611144096

Nagarabhavi

FLATS FOR-SALE @ Nagarabhavi Chandra Layout 2 & 3BHK Ready to Move In Good Location Call:9538472420 9845066608

Residential/ Commercial

Devanahalli

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Commerical

Basaveshwaranagar

BASAVESHWAR NAGAR 100 Feet Road Commercial 40X60 BDA Property For Sale Call: 9341260828

J C Road

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Villas/Bunglows

Kanakapura Road

4 BHK Villa with lift measuring 3150 Sq.ft in Unit No. 02, SWATAH Block, "AXIS TATVAM" at Kaggalipura Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore. Contact: 9902401486.

Industrial & Factory

Magadi Road

FOR SALE Industrial Building off Magadi road North Facing, 30 Ft Road, Land: 8,000 Sqft, Built up- 16000 Sqft, Power: 200KvA. Contact: 9035609555

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WANTED BDA Site Anjanapura, Banashankari 6th Stage, Vishweshwaraiah layout & any BDA Katha & Mysore MUDA Sites, immediate settlement. genuine Sellers Contact: 9902038118, 9449060605

WANTED SITE ANJANAPURA BCCHS Layout Narayan`Nagar Jayanagar Housing Society, Banashankari 6th`Stage 30x40,40x60. Direct Registration. Broker Excuse. Call:9663454878

Banashankari

BDA-SITES WANTED @ BSK 6th Stage all Blk Vishweshwaraiah Lyt Kempegowda Lyt 30x40, 40x60, 50x80 Call:9845555666

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CONTACT : 9845950996

Multiple Locations

WANTED BDA Sites Anjanapura-Arkavathi, Banashankari 6th stage, Vishweswaraiah, Kempegowda, Dr. Shivaramkaranth Layout. Contact: Sapthagiri "(Opposite BDA Head Office) "9036360366.

Vishweshwariah Layout

"WANTED 50X80, 40X60 EAST OR NORTH FACING SITE IN BDA VISHVESHWARAIAH LAYOUT, ULLAL UPKAR LAYOUT CALL: 6366903154"

WANTED BDA Site Vishweshwaria Layout 30x40, 40x60 Contact: 7899570235

JOB

To Place your Classified Ads Contact: 9886213331

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Any person/s having or claiming any right, title, estate or interest by way of inheritance, mortgage, sale, lease lien, charge, trust, maintenance, easements, transfer, license, possession, gift, encumbrance or in whatsoever manner are hereby required to give notice of the same to the undersigned in the address mentioned below within **10 days** from the date of publication thereof, together with the copies of all documents on the basis of which such claims are made, failing which any such right, title, interest or claim, if any will be deemed to have been waived and not binding on my client and my client will proceed to conclude the transaction of purchase without reference to the same, if any.

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Date: 14.02.2026 Place: Mysore

Sd/- RAKHEE JAIN,
Advocate, #1143, 1st Floor, Chanakya Circle, Geetha Road, Chamarajapuram, Mysore-570005

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

General

WANTED FOR Billing and Godown Incharge Qualification PU Pass With`Basic Computer knowledge Location Wilson-Garden Siddaiah Road Near Shantinagar Bus-stand Call:9845351200 9535218502.

PERSONAL

Lost

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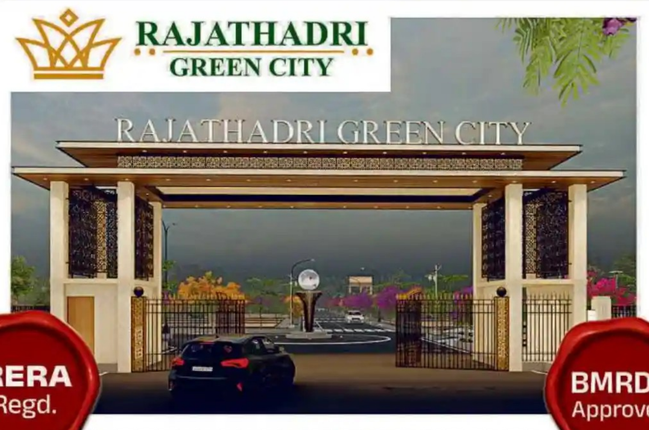

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